FOREIGN RELATIONS

WALPOLE

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Foreign Relations

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FOREIGN RELATIONS

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BY

SPENCER WALPOLE

AUTHOR OF
'A HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM 1815'

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FOREIGN RELATIONS.

CHAPTER I.

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF ENGLAND UP TO THE PEACE OF PARIS IN 1815.

THOSE persons whose lives have been spent in populous cities have probably reflected on the indifference with which each householder usually regards the interests of his nearest neighbours. A slender partition of brick and mortar, so slight that the voices in one house are audible in the other, forms an impassable barrier between two families: and the members of each of them go through the daily rounds of their ordinary lives without thought for their neighbour's sorrows, or their neighbour's cares. Occasionally, indeed, some event of extraordinary importance forces them to take an abnormal interest in the affairs of the next household. If a house or its inmates be attacked by illness or fire, the neighbouring families are no longer indifferent. When Ucalegon is in flames, Æneas is moved.

The relations between adjacent families in a single city in many ways resemble the relations between the different countries on the surface of the globe. In the generality of cases each people is ignorant of the questions

which are arising in other nations, and of the difficulties which are distressing them; and this ignorance or indifference is specially visible in our own country. Severed from the continent by nature, the British nation fancies that it can afford to disregard the embarrassments or aspirations of other people. Intent on its own business, it leaves the conduct of foreign affairs to professional politicians. Just, however, as fire or disease bursting out in one house agitates a neighbourhood, so revolution or war occurring in other countries moves the Englishman from his customary indifference. He wakes from his ordinary slumber—perhaps wakes almost too late—to find that events are occurring which are altering the face of a continent, or that he himself is committed to a policy which his good sense disapproves. In this case, to do him justice, the Englishman ceases to be indifferent, and often runs into the opposite extremes. Angry with himself for his own previous ignorance; excited by events which either influence his feelings or affect his interests, he finds some means of extricating himself from the policy to which the Foreign Office has been binding him; and, instead of leaving the conduct of foreign affairs to professional statesmen, alarms diplomatists, trained in the profession, by insisting on directing them himself. Foreign affairs in such cases seem neither dull nor unimportant; they become the fertile cause of the making and unmaking of ministries.

Yet it must be evident, to any one who thinks, that a foreign policy, which in quiet times is regulated by a succession of Foreign Ministers, and which, in unquiet times, is distorted from its ordinary tendencies by the susceptibilities or panics of a people, is not likely to present

a consistent or harmonious history. The foreign policy of this country has, in fact, been too frequently dependent on the views of particular statesmen, and has too frequently been rudely interrupted by the fall of one minister or the rise of another. Such results are evidently unsatisfactory, but such results are perhaps inevitable till the people realise, as a people, that each country has a foreign as well as a domestic policy of its own, and that it ought to be as impossible for a foreign minister to reverse the decisions at which the nation has seriously arrived on foreign affairs as it would be for a Prime Minister to repeal the Reform Act or to restore the Corn Laws.

Some risk, however, will always remain of such a result until the nation, as a nation, seriously reflects on the true meaning of a foreign policy, and steadily determines the shape which such a policy shall assume. For this purpose, however, it requires information which it cannot easily derive from ordinary libraries. Such information it would be both foolish and presumptuous to attempt to supply in a little book of one hundred and sixty pages. But, even in such a book, it may be possible to indicate with some precision the change which has occurred in the foreign policy of this country through the change in its own position both in Europe and the world; and it may be easy to supplement this account with some description of the machinery by which the foreign policy of the country is regulated. Such an account may, perhaps, make a few things intelligible, which at present it is hard to understand, and induce some people to take greater interest in affairs which at present they are too apt to leave to the management or mismanagement of professional statesmen.

It is a common mistake, both of students as well as of authors of history, to regard the occurrences of a past age from the standpoint of the present century, and to weigh the conduct of the politicians of the old time by modern tests. Such a system only misleads the author and the reader. No one is able to realise, and consequently no one is competent to describe, the circumstances of a century who has not succeeded in surrounding himself with the ideas which were prevalent at the time. And hence a novel may be often useful in supplementing the work of the historian. The novelist, in fact, repairs the omission which the historian often makes. The historian too frequently resuscitates the old characters, but he surrounds them with modern circumstances. The novelist, on the contrary, clothes modern men and women in the old dresses. Neither writer is entirely accurate; but the labours of the one to some extent supplement the researches of the other.

The false impression which history produces when the historian either fails or neglects to throw himself back into the period which he is describing is especially visible in those parts of his work which describe the relations of one country with another. The historian of this country, indeed, through no fault of his own, is almost bound on these subjects to create a false impression by his very title. He can hardly avoid calling his work a History of England; and he cannot, or does not, stop to point out that the term England, in the sense in which he uses it, has almost wholly changed its meaning. The historian of the Saxon Heptarchy means by England about half of the small island which is known as Great Britain; the historian of Norman England means one-

half of Great Britain and Normandy in France; the historian of Plantagenet England applies the term to England, Wales, half Ireland, and nearly one-half of France; the historian of Tudor England limits it to England, Wales, and Ireland alone; the historian of Stuart England, to Great Britain and Ireland; the historian of the eighteenth century includes in the term a constantly-increasing empire; which the historian of the nineteenth century discovers embraces almost one-seventh of the land on the surface of the globe.

It requires no great reflection, when these facts are succinctly before the reader, to show that with the variation of the empire the relations of this country with other nations have necessarily been modified. The interests which affect England at present were unknown to the Englishman of the Plantagenet period. No Englishman had settled in the wealthy territory which Englishmen have since acquired in the eastern hemisphere. The best geographers had not even guessed the existence of the vast continent which Columbus was destined to discover in the fifteenth century. The chief interest which Englishmen possessed in the affairs of other countries than their own arose from the desire of Christianity to rescue Jerusalem from the Moslem, or the ambition of their own sovereigns to extend the boundaries of their dominions. During the first two centuries after the Conquest, the first of these influences was the chief incident in the foreign policy of England. The stirring addresses of Peter the Hermit had accumulated a wave of enthusiasm which rolled eastwards over Europe to the Holy Land, and was broken on the rocky shores of the Levant. The kings of England shared, of course, in

the dangers and in the glories of the Crusades; and for two centuries the potentates of Western Europe devoted their energies to, and wasted their resources in, a fruitless attempt to beat back the tide of Moslem invasion. The extension of foreign intercourse was one of the few benefits which Europe indirectly acquired from the costly sacrifices which she thus made. But the extension of foreign intercourse, salutary as it proved in some respects, promoted war. The potentates of one generation joined their swords in a common alliance against the Saracen; the potentates of another generation amused themselves by fighting one against the other. The crusades of Richard I. were succeeded by the Welsh, Scotch, and French wars of the three Edwards of the Plantagenet line.

These wars were prepared in two ways. In the first place, the heiress of Henry I., marrying into the great house of Anjou, largely increased the Continental possessions of the English Crown. The Plantagenets ruled over one-half of modern France; and the interests of their purely English subjects were sacrificed for the sake of extending their possessions on the Continent. In the next place, the conquest of Wales by Edward I. consolidated the southern portion of Great Britain in one kingdom. This consolidation of territory gave the sovereign power; the large Continental possessions of the house of Anjou gave him an opportunity; and the ambitious temperament of Edward I. and Edward III. readily drove them into war. It is unnecessary to examine the worth of the particular pretexts which produced, under one of these sovereigns, war with Scotland; under another of them, war with France. It is sufficient

to say that the circumstances under which these wars arose influenced the foreign policy of England for three centuries. France and Scotland, each of them alone too weak to withstand the England of the Plantagenets, were forced into close alliance. A war with France was usually followed by a Scotch invasion of northern England; the Scotch refrained from their incursions till troubles had arisen in Continental England. So strong was the kingdom of the Plantagenets that it was able at the same time to beat both countries. Historians of England dwell with pardonable satisfaction on the presence in London, at the same time, of the captive king of Scotland and of the captive king of France. They fulfil a more useful duty when they point out that the close alliance into which common misfortune drove the defeated countries was a source of trouble to English statesmen for 250 years; and that the intercourse with France which the French alliance promoted has left its mark on Scottish habits and Scottish feeling to the present day.

The empire of the Plantagenets, which was founded by the marriage of Matilda, the heiress of England, with Geoffrey of Anjou, and which was enlarged by the conquests of Edward I. and Edward III., survived the fall of Richard II., and obtained its chief development in the reign of Henry V. But the conquests of Edward III. and Henry V. were lost under the feeble government of Henry VI. and his advisers. The Continental possessions of England were one after another taken from her, till she owned little more than a small strip of French territory round Calais. The British people, moreover, whose numbers had already been reduced by the terrible

plagues of the fourteenth century, were enfeebled by the long civil war of York and Lancaster; and England, which in the fourteenth century had defeated single-handed the united powers of France and Scotland, was, after the middle of the fifteenth century, no longer a menace either to French or Scotch.

From this period English history assumed a fresh phase. "The Union of the Roses," wrote Bolingbroke, "put an end to the civil wars of York and Lancaster, that had succeeded those we commonly call the barons' wars; and the humour of warring in France, that had lasted near four hundred years under the Normans and Plantagenets — for plunder as well as conquest — was spent. Our temple of Janus was shut by Henry VII. We neither laid waste our own nor other countries any longer."[1]

It so happened that at this moment, when the French were ceasing to be alarmed at the English, a series of fortunate marriages was rapidly consolidating another power in Western Europe. Spain, which had hitherto been a divided country, was consolidated by the union of Ferdinand with Isabella. Their grandson succeeded not only to this consolidated kingdom, but to the rich territory of the Netherlands, and to the authority of the empire. The Spaniards of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were the finest troops in Europe; a few enterprising adventurers added a large colonial empire to the possessions of their sovereign. Spain in this way became a great factor in Western Europe; and English statesmen, prudent in their generation, endeavoured to secure for their country the advantages of a close union

[1] *Bolingbroke's Study of History*, new edition, 1792, p. 176.

with Spain. The two sons of Henry VII. were successively married to Catharine of Aragon, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and England received as a princess and a queen the aunt of the prince who became the most powerful sovereign in Europe.

These marriages, however, intended to cement the alliance between Spain and England, were followed by other consequences. Spain and France, the two most powerful nations on the continent, became rivals in war; and both of them courted the aid of England, which was apparently capable of turning the balance in favour of either. During the first twenty years of the reign of Henry VIII. England alternately supported both the combatants. Wolsey, so far as it is possible to ascertain, was in favour of the French alliance; but he was constantly induced to support the cause of Spain by the promises or bribes of Charles V. He had the good sense, indeed, to project, in 1520, the meeting between Francis of France and Henry of England, which, from the magnificence displayed at it, is known as the Field of the Cloth of Gold. But the ostentatious pageant produced no lasting consequences. On the contrary, in the following year, England, flattered by a visit from Charles V., again reverted to its original policy, and entered into an alliance with Spain against France. For the next few years England and France were again at war. Scotland, following its old traditions, seized the opportunity for invading the Northern counties; and the state of things which had been familiar enough in Plantagenet England thus recurred in Tudor England under Henry VIII.

The new war brought little glory to the English

arms. The Scotch, indeed, who had enjoyed no cohesion after the defeat and death of James IV. at Flodden, were unable to prolong the contest; but the English gained few successes of any moment on French soil. Though, however, the English gained few successes, the French were destined to sustain a memorable reverse. In 1525, Francis I. was beaten and taken prisoner at Pavia. These events gave Charles V. a preponderating influence on the Continent. From that time, and for the greater part of a century, Spain was the most powerful of Continental nations.

It was under these circumstances that Wolsey reverted to his original policy, and endeavoured to form a Franco-English alliance. In doing so he was undoubtedly influenced by personal considerations. Charles V. had hinted to him, six years before, that his support of the Spanish alliance might lead to his advancement to the Vatican; and Wolsey—on the death of Leo X. and again on the death of Adrian VI.—had seen his claims coolly neglected by the Emperor. Wolsey, therefore, was partly influenced by personal disappointment. But this circumstance ought not to detract from the merits of his policy. He saw, as none of his contemporaries saw, that the whole course of European politics had been modified by the supremacy of Charles V.; and that the only means of resisting the Emperor was to strengthen the hands of France. It so happened that his own desire for a French alliance was promoted by the personal wishes of his master. Henry VIII. was anxious for a divorce from Catharine of Aragon. Charles V., Catharine's nephew, was naturally opposed to the divorce; and Henry, irritated at the opposition to his wishes, was ready to

abandon the Spanish alliance, and to throw himself into the arms of France.

Thus the new policy of a French alliance had reasons to recommend it both to sovereign and minister, but it was hardly intelligible to Englishmen generally, and was not popular in this country. The English people had not forgotten the conquests which their ancestors had won under Henry V., and the reverses which their own grandsires had experienced under Henry VI. Wolsey's policy, therefore, was not universally accepted. Throughout the early Tudor reigns, two parties in the State and two parties in Court respectively favoured the Spanish and French connection, and the country alternately adopted the two policies under a succession of ministers. But, throughout the whole period, a new cause was continually increasing in importance, which was exercising a constantly-growing influence on foreign policy. Up to the commencement of the sixteenth century, the foreign policy of every country was based on the interests of its reigning dynasty. After the commencement of the sixteenth century, sovereigns even made their interests subservient to their religion. The bigotry of the Governments which retained the old faith, and the merciless cruelty with which they endeavoured to enforce their views on the unhappy populations which were subjected to their rule, forced the nations, who adopted the Reformed religion, into a closer alliance. France and Spain, the two great Roman Catholic powers of Western Europe, drew closely together. England, everywhere regarded as the champion of the Reformed Churches, had to seek less powerful allies elsewhere.

In the course of the sixteenth century, therefore, the

foreign policy of England had been successively based on three principles. She had begun the century the ally of Spain: before thirty years were over she had allied herself with France against Spain; at the conclusion of the century she was holding herself aloof from both her neighbours. Her ability to do so, it so happened, was promoted by the altered relations of this country with Scotland. The fifteenth century was essentially an epoch of decisive marriages; and, among the marriages which have been pregnant with lasting consequences, none was happier, perhaps none was more memorable, than that of Margaret, Henry VII.'s daughter, with James IV. of Scotland. The marriage was in itself a proof that the wiser statesmen of the two countries were contemplating the possibility of superseding the ancient rivalry of Scotch and English with a close friendship; it ultimately, of course, secured the happy union of the two kingdoms. In the interval, indeed, between the marriage and the union, the old jealousies, which had long disturbed the border counties, occasionally caused a renewal of warfare. Just as in England, and in the English Court, there was a Spanish party and a French party, so in Scotland, and in the Scottish Court, there was a French party and an English party. Flodden and Pinkie are prominent proofs how the old international jealousy led to renewal of war. But, just as France and Spain drew closer together in the interests of the Roman Church, so England and Scotland drew closer together in the common interests of resistance to Rome. In the commencement of Elizabeth's reign the unprecedented spectacle occurred of an English army—invited by the men of Scotland—advancing to drive a French garrison out of a Scotch town.

From thenceforward the two nations were never ranged one against the other; and the siege of Leith in the early years of Elizabeth may therefore be cited as a turning point in foreign policy. Before that siege the inclination of official Scotland had been to look towards France. From that siege all Scotland gradually reconciled itself to a closer union with England.

Religion—and the necessities which a reformed religion caused—thus forced England and Scotland into a temporary agreement in the sixteenth century, and paved the way for the union of the two kingdoms under one monarch in the seventeenth, and for their formal union in the eighteenth, century. The danger which English statesmen thenceforward dreaded was not the union of France and Scotland, but the alliance of France and Spain. In the first half of the seventeenth century Spain was the most important of these powers. But Spain never recovered from the intolerable government which the bigotry of Philip II. imposed upon her. She was exhausted by the vast, yet vain, efforts which she made to preserve the Netherlands; and by the folly of Philip III. in expelling, in one decree, 900,000 of the most industrious of his subjects from Spanish territory. While Spain, under the House of Austria, was sinking into decrepitude, Germany was rent to pieces by the thirty years' war; and thus the troubles of her neighbours, as much as the ability of her ministers, made France virtually mistress of the Continent. While Spain was still apparently strong, the Court, under the earlier Stuarts, courted the Spanish alliance. When Spain was no longer strong, and when the treaty of the Pyrenees had apparently made France supreme, the

Court under the later Stuarts favoured the French alliance. The people of this country, in the early part of the seventeenth century, with a true instinct, disliked the notions of a Spanish alliance which the English Court under James I. pressed upon them. The people under the later Stuarts disliked the notion of the French alliance, at which Charles II. was continually aiming. It would be a mere waste of time for the purposes of this book to trace the foreign policy of James I. and Buckingham. But it is of the first importance to understand the diplomatic systems of Charles II. and Sir W. Temple. The diplomatic history of England in its modern sense dates from this period; and the foundations of British Foreign Policy were laid by Sir W. Temple.

Sir W. Temple was impressed with the danger which threatened both Europe and England from the gradual absorption by France of the scattered provinces of the Spanish monarchy. Louis XIV. was extending French territory on every side at the expense of Spain; and France under his rule was rapidly becoming supreme on the Continent. Sir W. Temple persuaded the English Government to conclude a triple alliance with Holland and Sweden for the avowed purpose of checking the advance of France. The league was eminently successful; Holland was saved; and Sir W. Temple became one of the most popular men in England. One man in England, however, disliked the policy to which circumstances had forced him to assent. Charles II.'s idea of foreign policy was dependence on Louis XIV. In 1670, two years after the conclusion of the Triple Alliance, he carried out his own views by signing the treaty of Dover. By this treaty Charles undertook to join Louis XIV. in

crushing the Dutch; and perhaps nothing but the energy of the stadtholder, William of Orange, afterwards King of England, prevented his doing so. The war which the royal allies had initiated was marked by no successes. Its cost led to a grave financial crisis in this country. The Exchequer was closed. The cabal by which England was governed was dissolved. The treaty of Nimeguen was signed; the king undertook to return to Sir W. Temple's policy; and as a pledge of his sincerity gave his niece in marriage to the stadtholder. The authority of Parliament to this extent had prevailed; and the Court had been compelled to adopt the foreign policy of the nation.

From the signing of the treaty of Nimeguen to the Revolution of 1688 the same policy prevailed. James II., like Charles II., inclined towards France; the nation warmly supported the contrary policy which Sir W. Temple had initiated. The Revolution, of course, confirmed the nation's decision. William III. was at once the head and the heart of the coalition against France; and the opinions which he had already formed on the necessity of curbing French ambition were strengthened by the support which Louis XIV. afforded to James II. Just as it had been the object of Sir W. Temple to combine Holland, Sweden, and England against France, so it was the policy of William to form a grand alliance between the States-General, the Emperor, Spain, and England. The policy endured throughout the war, which was terminated at the Peace of Ryswick. The objects of William were secured; and the growth of France was prevented by his skilful diplomacy and steady perseverance.

Louis XIV., however, prevented in this way from increasing his territories by force of arms, had obviously another opportunity of extending his dominions. Charles II. of Spain, the last male heir of Philip II., had no child and no hope of children. His eldest sister had been the wife of Louis XIV.; his youngest sister had been the first wife of the Emperor Leopold, and had died after having only one child, a daughter, married to the Elector of Bavaria; and Leopold was himself the son of Charles's aunt. Both Louis and Leopold, at the time of their marriages, had solemnly renounced all claim to the throne of Spain on behalf of their wives. But no such renunciation had been made in the case of the marriage of Leopold's mother. If these renunciations had not existed, the descendants of Louis XIV. were clearly the immediate heirs of the Spanish monarchy. If, on the contrary, the renunciations were maintained, Leopold himself was the next heir to the splendid inheritance, which, however, he was ready to pass on to his second son, the Archduke Charles. Rival claims of this character, supported by the greatest powers of the Continent, threatened the peace of the world. To maintain peace, and to prevent the excessive growth of France, the First Partition Treaty was concluded in 1698. By this treaty the claims of the competitors were compromised. Louis XIV. himself consented to waive his descendants' claim to the throne of Spain, on condition of receiving Naples, Sicily, and the province of Guipuscoa; the Milanese were allotted to the Archduke Charles; and the Electoral Prince of Bavaria was recognised as successor to Spain and the Indies. Notwithstanding the grumbling of the English, who disliked the

addition of a single province to the French monarchy, and the remonstrances of the Castilians, who resented the partition of the Spanish dominions, the First Partition Treaty had apparently done its work. But a year was hardly over before an unexpected event restored everything to its original confusion. The young Prince of Bavaria, whom France and England had agreed in designating as heir to the Spanish monarchy, unexpectedly died, and the weary work of the difficult negotiation had to commence anew. France, England, and Holland thereupon agreed on the arrangement which is known as the Second Partition Treaty. Under this scheme, France, in addition to Naples, Sicily, and Guipuscoa, received the Milanese, which she was at liberty to exchange for Lorraine; and the rest of the Spanish dominions were settled on the Archduke Charles, the second son of the Emperor.

These arrangements pleased hardly any one. The English people thought that the cession of Naples and Sicily to France converted the Mediterranean into a French lake; the Emperor considered that his own interests had been sacrificed; and the Castilians resented the partition of the Spanish dominions. In England the ministers who had been cognisant of the treaty were impeached.[1] In Germany the Emperor declined to accede to it; in Spain the Castilians persuaded their unlucky sovereign to leave all his territory by will to Philip, Duc d'Anjou, the grandson of Louis XIV.

[1] Lord Somers was impeached for placing the Great Seal to blank powers, under which the First Partition Treaty was concluded. The conduct of William III., in negotiating treaties without the knowledge of his ministers, will be noticed *infra*, p. 114.

Charles II. made his will and died; Louis XIV. occupied the throne of Spain for his grandson; and William III. discovered, to his intense annoyance, that the English preferred the will to the treaty, and considered that, on English grounds, the placing of a Bourbon prince on the Spanish throne was a smaller evil than the cession of important Spanish provinces to France. The Second Partition Treaty, like the First, fell consequently still-born. Philip, Duc d'Anjou, quietly ascended the throne of Charles II.; and Louis XIV., if he had only exercised common prudence, might have gained all his objects without shedding a drop of blood.

Louis XIV., however, was emboldened by success to venture on two things which proved a direct challenge to this country. The Dutch had been allowed to garrison the principal fortresses on the northern frontier of France; Louis XIV. had the assurance to seize them in his grandson's name. Even this act, however, did not cause war, though it excited so much indignation in England that William was encouraged to conclude a secret treaty with Holland and the Emperor for the recovery of the Netherlands and for the transfer of the Milanese to Austria. If Louis XIV. had merely seized the barrier fortresses, the secret treaty, like the partition treaties, might have come to nothing. In an evil hour for France, however, he consented, on the deathbed of James II., to recognise the claims of the Prince who is known in English history as the Pretender. The English people, realising the gravity of the situation, immediately clamoured for war. The Parliament was in favour of peace; the people would not hear of peace. A general election gave them an opportunity of enforcing their own views.

The Tories, who had resisted William's foreign policy, and who had opposed the Partition Treaties, were beaten at the polls; the Whigs were restored to the principal places in the Government; and the war began which was finally concluded at the Peace of Utrecht.

Lord Stanhope has called the Peace of Utrecht the inglorious conclusion of a glorious war; and, if the terms which were obtained at Utrecht in 1713 be compared either with the objects with which the war was commenced, or with the conditions on which it might have been concluded in 1709, the treaty will seem inglorious enough to every Englishman. But, if its terms be examined from a more reasonable standpoint, few moderate persons will be prepared to pronounce this unqualified condemnation upon it. In the first place, to import a modern phrase into an ancient controversy, a good deal had happened since the outbreak of the war. The birth of the little boy, who in 1715 became Louis XV., had placed Philip V. of Spain one step farther from the throne of France. The death of the Emperor Leopold and of his eldest son had made the Archduke Charles, whom the allies had designated for the throne of Spain, Charles VI. and Emperor. The arrangements which William III. had contemplated would have, no doubt, separated France from Spain; but they might have reproduced some of the evils which had resulted from the union of Spain and the Empire under Charles V. If these facts be borne in mind, the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht will not seem so unwise. The Spanish monarchy was diminished under the treaty by the cession of the Netherlands, of Sardinia, and of the Italian provinces, to Charles VI., and of Sicily to Savoy; the

Dutch barrier was re-established; and England retained the Island of Minorca and the strong fortified rock, the key of the Mediterranean, which she had taken soon after the commencement of the war, and of which no subsequent attacks have succeeded in depriving her.

In this way the Peace of Utrecht, and its companion the Barrier Treaty,[1] were the logical outcome of William III.'s foreign policy. It was William's object to provide an adequate counterpoise to France; or, in the language of diplomacy, to establish "a balance of power" in Europe. The balance of power, the constant aim of diplomatists for 200 years, was first invented by the statesmen of the little republics of a divided Italy; it was accepted as a guiding doctrine in Western Europe in the beginning of the seventeenth century; it was suggested to the British Parliament as an object to be secured in the first year of the eighteenth century. "If you do in good earnest desire to see England hold the balance of Europe, it will appear"—so spoke William III. within a few months of his death—"by your right improving the present opportunity." The phrase, however, suggested by the king was soon adopted by Parliament, and the Mutiny Act professed through its preamble to be passed for the purpose of preserving the balance of power in Europe. The balance of power was certainly redressed at Utrecht in the sense in which William would have desired. Additional weight was thrown into the scale of Austria, and France was weakened by the loss of the Barrier fortresses. The satisfactory thing to Englishmen,

[1] The Barrier Treaty authorised the Dutch to garrison the frontier or "barrier" fortresses which Austria was compelled to maintain in the Netherlands.

however, was, that to their own country was assigned the part of Jupiter in the *Iliad*. Just as the lot of Hector was weighed against the lot of Achilles while Jupiter held the scales, so at Utrecht the lot of Austria was weighed against the lot of France, and the scales were placed in the hands of the British Ministry.

The Tory ministry, which signed the Peace of Utrecht, was in favour of peace with France. The Whig ministers of George I. adopted the same policy. Many of the reasons, indeed, which had led to the former French wars disappeared with the death of Louis XIV. in 1715. The new King of France, Louis XV., was a sickly child. His nearest male heir was his uncle, the King of Spain. After his uncle's family his next heir was the Duc d'Orleans, Regent of France. It had, however, been solemnly stipulated at Utrecht that the crowns of Spain and France should not be worn by the same person; and it was the obvious interest of the Regent of France to enforce this stipulation. His own chances of the throne of France depended on Philip's being confined to Spain. If that were done, and the stipulations of Utrecht were thereby enforced, the Regent Orleans, in the event of Louis XV.'s death, would be King of France.

Thus the man who was really the representative of France had a strong personal interest in maintaining the arrangements of Utrecht. But the conditions which had been laid down at Utrecht were, at this particular conjuncture, disregarded by the extraordinary statesman whose short career threw a temporary meteor-like light on the dark fortunes of the Spanish monarchy. Alberoni devised the sensational policy of recovering for Spain the Italian provinces which she had lost at Utrecht; and,

throwing his own energy into an enfeebled administration, almost succeeded in persuading Europe that he had endowed the kingdom with a new vitality. Spain seemed once more the disturbing feature of Europe; and France, England, and Holland formed a triple alliance—which the accession of Austria converted into a quadruple alliance—for the purpose of curbing the pretensions of Spain, and for maintaining the policy of Utrecht. The plans of Alberoni were foiled; Alberoni himself was exiled; and Spain sank once more into the lethargy from which his abilities had roused her.

So far as English foreign policy is concerned, the important point to notice in these events is that the ministers of George I. had reverted to the policy of Wolsey, and had negotiated a fresh alliance between France and England. But the circumstances which prompted this alliance soon disappeared. Louis XV. grew up to manhood, married, and had sons of his own. The chances which Philip V. possessed of succeeding to his nephew's throne became continually less; the chance of an Orleans succession became too remote to be worth consideration. French and Spanish politics were thus no longer complicated by the jealousies or ambitions of princes; and France and Spain resumed their former policy, and signed a family compact. This fresh alliance renewed all the dangers which William III. had passed his life in endeavouring to avert. The balance of power in Western Europe was apparently disturbed by the closer union of France and Spain. The terms of the compact were not, indeed, publicly known; and, when war broke out between England and Spain in 1739, France, in the first instance, only gave Spain a moral

support. But the new war, commenced on an obscure commercial quarrel, was soon extended to other parts of Europe, and England found herself involved in a great European struggle. The interest which she felt in the struggle will not be understood unless attention is paid to the altered conditions which arose from the succession of the House of Hanover to the throne.

At the time at which the Peace of Utrecht was signed England had no possession on the Continent except the Rock of Gibraltar. She had therefore no immediate interest in preserving the balance which had been mainly restored by her exertions; and it is possible that, if she had remained isolated in her insularity, the expense of Continental wars might have deterred her statesmen from further intervention in the affairs of Europe. The death of Anne, however, placed the Elector of Hanover on her throne. For more than 120 years the kings of England had a hereditary interest in a petty province of Germany; and, as Electors of Hanover, were perpetually interfering in the affairs of Germany. It so happened, too, that at this precise moment the disturbing element in Europe, which had hitherto been in France and Spain, moved eastward to Germany. For the first four centuries after the Conquest the chief danger to England had arisen from the union of Scotland with France. For the next two centuries the chief danger to England had arisen from the union or possible union of France with Spain. In the middle of the eighteenth century the rivalry of Austria and Prussia became the chief element of disturbance in Europe.

Charles VI., Emperor of Germany, the prince whom William had ultimately selected for the Spanish throne,

had no son. He desired to secure his hereditary dominions for his daughter Maria Theresa. During the last sixteen years of the Emperor's life the diplomatists of Europe were plotting and counterplotting with this object. In 1740 Charles died; his death let loose the dogs of war on Europe; Prussia, under Frederick the Great, occupied Silesia; the Elector of Bavaria claimed Bohemia; the Elector of Saxony, Austria; the King of Sardinia, the Duchy of Milan. England supported the claims of Maria Theresa; while France used her influence and power to help the Elector of Bavaria. The contest which then ensued assumed many phases. Under Sir R. Walpole this country merely endeavoured to support Maria Theresa; under his successor Wilmington it tried to break the power of France; under Pelham it recurred to its original policy, and withdrew from the war in 1745 when the throne of Maria Theresa was secure, and Prussia endangered by her ambitious views. Peace was not concluded till three years after this country had withdrawn from the contest; and the peace, when it was once made, only ensured a temporary respite for the combatants. War, however, when it again broke out, found that many of the pieces on the chessboard had changed sides. In 1740 it had been the object of English statesmen to secure Maria Theresa her hereditary dominions. In 1756 it was the object of English statesmen to secure Frederick the Great the kingdom which he had inherited and acquired. In 1740 Maria Theresa was threatened by a coalition of which Frederick himself was a leading spirit. In 1756 Frederick was threatened by a coalition of which Maria Theresa was the inspiring agent. In 1740 France and her allies had stood against

Austria and England; in 1756 France, Austria, and their allies stood against Prussia and England. In 1740 England had defended Maria Theresa against Frederick for the sake of preserving the balance of power. In 1756 she defended Frederick against Maria, also for the sake of preserving the balance of power.

These wars, undertaken to preserve a balance in Germany, had, however, much wider results. Each of them became a contest between England and France, and this contest was carried on in three out of the four continents of the world. War was not concluded till France had ceased to be either an Asiatic or an American power, and England had obtained supremacy in the East and supremacy in the West. These victories, whatever other consequences they may have produced, removed one cause of war between the two countries. Just as the loss in the fifteenth century of the Continental possessions, which the House of Plantagenet had either inherited or acquired, paved the way for the reconciliation of France and England in the sixteenth century, so the loss by France of the American and Indian colonies in the eighteenth century prepared the alliance of the two countries in the nineteenth century. They had ceased to be rivals either in the East or in the West. There was a possibility, in consequence, of their becoming friends.

Centuries of warfare, however, leave bitter memories behind them. Nothing is so difficult to determine as a hereditary quarrel; and the old feud between French and English was to flash forth with renewed vigour on two occasions before it was to be extinguished, let us hope, for ever. In the war, however, which was terminated by the Peace of Versailles in 1783, and in the

war which commenced in 1793, totally distinct issues were at stake from those which were settled by the Peace of Paris in 1763. In the American War the real contest was one for the possession of the United States, and France, Spain, and Holland were only drawn into it by that curious fate which frequently tends to convert neutrals into combatants. The war which broke out in 1793, and into which this country was unfortunately driven against the will of Mr. Pitt, was a war of opinions; Europe fought in the first instance for the sake of suppressing the ideas to which revolution had given birth, and of restoring the old system, which it had not yet learned to regard as extinct. It is true that in the course of time the war of opinions which Europe was promoting was converted into a war of conquest undertaken by France. If the old doctrine of the balance of power had never been heard of, Europe could have hardly avoided the contest into which it was forced by French aggression. It owes a debt to this country for the persistence with which it continued the struggle. Yet so far as Continental Europe was concerned, how nugatory were the results which a century of warfare had produced! In the war of the Austrian succession, in the Seven Years' War, in the American War, in the Revolutionary War, France and England had been arrayed against each other, and what had either of them, at any rate in Continental Europe, but the inevitable bill to show for the struggle? "For a period of six hundred years," wrote Mr. Cobden, with some natural exaggeration, "the French and English people have never ceased to regard each other as natural enemies. . . . It was reserved for our own day to witness the close of a feud

the longest, the bloodiest, and yet in its consequences the most nugatory, of any that is to be found in the annals of the world."

Yet there was one characteristic about this feud which ought to be noticed. Long as it had lasted, deadly as it had proved, the quarrel had almost always been one between princes and not between peoples. The interests of dynasties, and not the interests of nationalities, had usually prompted the struggle. "I know very well, sir," —such were the words of Mr. Disraeli thirty years ago, — "that if you go back to ancient history, or rather to the ancient history of the two countries, you may appeal to Cressy and Poictiers and to Agincourt, and believe that there has always been a struggle between the two countries, and that that struggle has always redounded to the glory of England. But it should be remembered that these were not so much wars between France and England, as between the King of France and the King of England as a French Prince; that the latter was fighting for his provinces of Picardy and Aquitaine; and that, in fact, it was not a struggle between the two nations." Since "that happy hour when the keys of Calais were fortunately delivered over for ever to a French monarch . . . the most sagacious sovereigns and the most eminent statesmen of England, almost without exception, have held that the French alliance, or a cordial understanding with the French nation, should be the corner-stone of our diplomatic system, and the keynote of our foreign policy." Historically, of course, this extract contains some inaccuracies; but it expounds, at the same time, a great truth which has hitherto attracted inadequate attention.

Thus the diplomatic history of England, from the Norman Conquest to the conclusion of the great war in 1815, naturally divides itself into many periods. Up to the beginning of the sixteenth century the chief danger to England arose from the possible union of Scotland with France; and, as a matter of fact, France and Scotland were the only powers with which England was ever at war. The marriage of Margaret of England with James IV. of Scotland ultimately removed one of these dangers. Thenceforward England and Scotland gradually drew together; first as allies, and afterwards as an United Kingdom. But, while one fortunate marriage was thus relieving England from the dangers to which a hostile Scotland had exposed her, a series of other marriages was gradually consolidating the Spanish monarchy, and uniting Spain, the Netherlands, and Germany under one sovereign. For a hundred years Spain and not France became the chief power on the Continent; and British statesmen, instead of dreading the alliance of France and Scotland, were usually able to play off France against Spain. These circumstances, however, were terminated before the conclusion of the sixteenth century; and Spain and France, actuated by common interests, and impelled by a common faith, ceased to be rivals and became friends. Thenceforward British diplomatists were confronted by a new peril. Just as their predecessors had dreaded the union of France with Scotland, so they were alarmed by the possible union of France with Spain. These alarms continued to inspire diplomacy till after the conclusion of the Peace of Utrecht. The decline of Spain and the rise of Germany subsequently diverted attention from Western to Central

Europe; and the wars of Frederick the Great and of Maria Theresa seemed of more pressing importance than the affairs of the Spanish Peninsula. But the old dread of Spanish and French union remained; it inspired one of the most stirring episodes of the Napoleonic wars; it threatened war between France and England within the last forty years.

The foreign policy of England, however, in the present century, has turned on considerations which cannot properly be considered at the close of this chapter. Up to 1815 foreign policy was chiefly regulated by considerations affecting the balance of power. After Waterloo the doctrine of non-intervention gradually superseded the old theory of William III.; and this country, instead of plunging into every European contest, deliberately abstained from intervening in the affairs of Western Europe. The change of thought which promoted this revolution in policy is one of the most memorable in European history. Its principal effects will be shortly sketched in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER II.

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF ENGLAND FROM THE PEACE OF PARIS IN 1815.

IT is never an easy matter to determine the exact importance of any great historical event. Some writers are disposed to exaggerate, and others to minimise, the results which have ensued from any particular episode. And this clashing of opinion, which may be found among the historians of almost any period of the world's history, is especially visible among those writers who have treated of the consequences which resulted from the Battle of Waterloo. All of them are indeed ready to allow the greatness of the victory, all of them are willing to admit the vast effect which it had on the immediate future of Europe. But, while one set of thinkers is of opinion that we are still enjoying the benefits which Waterloo secured to us, another class of persons reminds us that the results which ensued from the battle were entirely lost before fifty-four years were over. Belgium had been separated from Holland; Austria had been driven out of Italy; the petty German principalities had been absorbed in a United Germany; the Bourbons had been expelled from France; and a Napoleon for more than twenty years had occupied the first place in a new French Republic and a new French Empire. Almost all the re-

sults which diplomacy had secured in 1815 had been set aside, and other territorial and dynastic arrangements had been substituted in their place.

Reasoning of this kind, however, has the fault of overlooking the one great result which Waterloo secured. It did not obtain permanence for any of the arrangements which diplomatists desired, but it gave Europe—what Europe had never known before—almost exactly forty years of peace. For the best part of half a century no one of the five great Continental powers drew the sword against another of them. A continuous peace of forty years was attended with consequences which even the wisest statesmen could hardly have foreseen. The sheep multiplied till they became too strong for their shepherds. The people, increasing in numbers and wealth, insisted on obtaining some voice in the management of their own affairs. The statesmen who had met after Waterloo had done nothing but consider the interests of dynasties. Before five years were over the wisest statesmen were forced to consider the interests of nationalities. Before ten years were over the old doctrine that the people existed for the sake of kings was replaced in some parts of Europe by the new doctrine that the kings existed for the sake of the people.

The chief champion of the old doctrine in Europe was Alexander of Russia. His ablest supporter was Metternich of Austria. "J'ai gouverné l'Europe quelquefois l'Autriche jamais." Such was the declaration of Metternich after his fall. The history of Europe from 1815 to 1822 almost justified the arrogance of his assertion. Continental Europe lay under the heel of autocracy, and Metternich was the ablest of the counsellors on whom

autocracy relied. Alexander and Metternich thoroughly believed in their capacity to stop revolution everywhere, by stamping out the first symptoms of uprising. Prussia, comparatively weak, naturally threw in her lot with the neighbouring empires. Louis XVIII., restored to the throne of his ancestors by the assistance of the allied powers, as naturally repudiated the right of peoples to rise against their rulers. The four great powers of the Continent were thus practically agreed to force peace on Europe, much as in our own time we insure health for our herds. They proposed to stamp out the first symptoms of revolt, just as we stamp out the first symptoms of cattle plague.

England could not formally adopt the principles of the Holy Alliance. She enjoyed the advantage of self-government; some of her wisest statesmen were indignant with the manner in which whole peoples had been parcelled out to this and that sovereign at Vienna; her ministers could not openly support the views of Alexander and Metternich. But the foreign policy of England was, at that time, directed by a statesman who was secretly in favour of the views which he could not venture openly to uphold. Those persons, indeed, who found their opinion of the foreign policy of Lord Castlereagh on the public despatches which he wrote, are likely to form an inaccurate idea of the true nature of that minister's system. He had succeeded to the Foreign Office in 1812; he had represented his country at Vienna and Paris; he was in terms of close intimacy with Alexander and Metternich; and they thoroughly understood his real views. Metternich was perfectly aware that the British Foreign Minister's despatches were written for

the House of Commons, and, to use a cant phrase, discounted them accordingly. The British Foreign Minister, it was perfectly well understood, would make a spirited written protest against any act of despotism; it was equally well understood that no British regiment would embark, no British ship would sail, to support his protest.[1] From 1815 to 1822, Europe was practically governed on these principles. The people were kept in peace; but

[1] As this has been denied, it may be desirable to support the statement with the authority. Lord George Bentinck, Canning's Private Secretary, told Greville, "Some time after they had been in office (after Lord Londonderry's death) they found in a drawer, which apparently had been forgotten or overlooked, some papers, which were despatches and copies of correspondence between Lord Castlereagh and Lord Stewart (Lord Castlereagh's brother and ambassador at Vienna). Those despatches were very curious. . . . There was an account of the discovery Lord Stewart had made of the treachery of an office messenger, who had for a long time carried all his despatches to Metternich before he took them to England; and Lord Stewart says, 'I tremble when I think of the risk which my despatches have incurred of coming before the House of Commons, as there were letters of Lord Londonderry's written expressly 'to throw dust in the eyes of the Parliament.' These were his own expressions, and he said, 'You will understand this, and know what to say to Metternich.' In fact, while Lord Castlereagh was obliged to pretend to disapprove of the Continental system of the Holy Alliance, he secretly gave Metternich every assurance of his private concurrence, and it was not till long after Mr. Canning's accession that Metternich could be persuaded of his sincerity in opposing these views, always fancying that he was obliged to act a part, as his predecessor had done, to keep the House of Commons quiet."—*Greville Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 105. There is a curious memorandum of Charles, Lord Londonderry, in the *Wellington Despatches* (Civil Series from 1815), vol. i. p. 510, which will be found to confirm this view. The statements in the earlier part of this chapter are summarised from the author's larger work, *A History of England from* 1815. The exact authorities, on which they are founded, are quoted in that work.

the peace was the peace which is maintained in a school by the ferule of the master. In 1820, however, disturbances broke out which severely tested the system which Alexander had instituted, and to which Lord Castlereagh had assented. The Neapolitan people rose against their ruler and demanded a constitution. The army supported the people, and the king found it necessary to assent to the demand. The great powers of Continental Europe met in Congress at Troppau, to consider what they should do under these circumstances. Lord Stewart, the brother of the British Minister, was present at the conference. The autocrats of Europe refused to acknowledge the revolt which had occurred; and they summoned the King of Naples to meet them at Laybach and there receive their decision. At Laybach they solemnly determined that the temporary occupation of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies was indispensably necessary; and they authorised Austria to march an army upon Naples. The republicans of Southern Italy were no match for the disciplined battalions of the Emperor of Austria, and autocratic government was easily restored. Gratified at their easy victory, the autocrats proceeded to determine that "useful or necessary changes in legislation and in the administration of States ought only to emanate from the free will and the intelligent and well-weighed conviction of those whom God has rendered responsible for power." Lord Stewart remained at Troppau and Laybach while these events took place; a British squadron was stationed in the Mediterranean, and made no effort to protect the Neapolitans. True to his principles, the British Foreign Minister expressed a formal disapproval of the whole proceedings in the House of Commons;

equally true to them, he took care to do nothing to interfere with them.

Gratified with their success, pleased with the ease with which they had stamped out revolution in Italy, the autocrats of Europe decided, a year afterwards, to repeat the whole process. Spain, like Naples, had ventured on demanding a constitution from its Bourbon sovereign. Spain, like Naples, had not received the boon from the autocrat whom God or the allies had made responsible for power; and the Bourbon on the Spanish throne, like the Bourbon on the Neapolitan throne, was evidently a fit object for the care of the Holy Alliance. The great powers of Europe decided on meeting in Congress at Verona to renew their own friendship, and to consider what should be done with Spain. If everything had remained in the same position, there could have been no reasonable doubt as to what they would have done. But the whole policy of Europe was suddenly altered by an event which no one had expected. Lord Castlereagh, or Lord Londonderry, for he had succeeded to the higher title, committed suicide; and, after an embarrassing interval, Mr. Canning was appointed Foreign Minister. Mr. Canning's policy was very different from that of his predecessor. He would, in the first place, have liked, if he had been able to have done so, to have prevented any interference in the affairs of Spain. But he was, in the next place, determined, if interference there must be, that it should not come from Europe as a united body. He succeeded, with the Duke of Wellington's assistance, in making the French Government jealous of European interference. The proposal of the Russian Emperor that France should act as the agent of Europe, and that he

himself should move an army westwards in support of France, accordingly received powerful opposition at Verona. The Congress broke up without arriving at any very definite conclusion; and the Holy Alliance, which had been the curse of Europe, was practically destroyed.

Two conferences, held within a short period, had produced entirely different results. In the one case, the autocrats of Europe had empowered Austria as their own agent to stamp out an Italian Revolution. In the other case, the autocrats of Europe had found themselves unable to obtain the help of France as their own agent to stamp out a Spanish Revolution. They had succeeded in 1821, because they had the connivance of Lord Castlereagh. They failed in 1822, because they had the active opposition of Mr. Canning. Till the crisis came, they never realised the difference which a single change in the composition of the British Ministry had made. They had been accustomed to receive liberal despatches from Lord Castlereagh, and to regard them, at their true worth, as clever expedients for managing the House of Commons. When they received liberal despatches from Mr. Canning, they naturally thought that they were written with the same object. They never imagined that, while Lord Castlereagh had only been supplying himself with an argument for future use, Mr. Canning's reasoning was intended for immediate application. There is perhaps no reason for surprise that they should have been misled. Englishmen, even at the present time, quote particular passages from the despatches of Lord Castlereagh to prove that his policy was identical with that of Mr. Canning. No falser test could possibly be given. The distinction between Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning must be

sought not in their public despatches, but in their actions. Judged in this way, there is an immeasurable interval between Troppau and Verona. At Troppau, Lord Castlereagh allowed the Holy Alliance to have its way; at Verona Mr. Canning dealt to it its deathblow.

The position which Great Britain assumed, under Mr. Canning's guidance at Verona, constituted the first great revolution in the foreign policy of this country. Thenceforward Great Britain was steadily opposed to the resolution of the autocratic powers to perpetuate by force the arrangements of 1815. But Mr. Canning, though he succeeded in preventing the interference of Europe, as Europe, in Spain—was unable to prevent the interference of France. Louis XVIII. sent his son, the Duc d'Angouleme, with an army to restore the authority of the wretched Bourbon who misgoverned the Spanish Empire. In 1821 Lord Castlereagh had lodged only a tardy and timid protest against Austrian interference in Italy. In 1823 Mr. Canning did not wait a day to protest against French interference in Spain. His protest failed. The Duc d'Angouleme had a comparatively easy task, and autocracy was restored in the Peninsula. But Mr. Canning seized the opportunity to retaliate with an effect which startled Europe from the Tagus to the Vistula. Spain was chiefly important from the vast possessions in South America, which Spanish valour of another age had won for her. The Spanish colonies in 1823 were in revolt, and it was obvious that Spain alone was unable to subdue them. The allied powers of Europe wished to deal with the Spanish colonies as they had already dealt with Naples, and as they had proposed to deal with Spain. They suggested that they should meet in conference in

Paris, and discuss the question. The conference met, but Mr. Canning refused to have anything to do with it. It met, therefore, only to fail and to separate. After its separation, Mr. Canning took the course which he referred to afterwards, in language familiar as household words. It was obvious that Spain alone could not subdue her rebellious colonists; but it was not obvious that France, which still held Spain in her grasp, could not achieve the task; and this result Mr. Canning, in 1824, rendered hopeless by recognising the independence of Mexico, Columbia, and Buenos Ayres. "I resolved," he said, "that, if France had Spain, it should not be Spain with the Indies. I called the New World into existence, to redress the balance of the Old."

Thus, in 1821, Europe at Laybach, with Lord Castlereagh's connivance, had put down revolt at Naples; in 1822 the opposition of Mr. Canning had prevented the repetition of the same decision at Verona; in 1824 Mr. Canning had acknowledged successful revolt in South America. In 1826 he took a fresh step. Civil war broke out in Portugal, and the partisans of Dom Miguel, the champion of Absolutism, crossed into Spain, and, with the connivance of the Spanish Government, and (as it was supposed) with the tacit approval of France, prepared to invade Portugal. These circumstances led to the most memorable episode in Mr. Canning's foreign policy. He had already declared that, if France had Spain, it should be Spain without the Indies, and had accordingly recognised the independence of the great Spanish colonies in South America; he now declared that France should not have Portugal at all. And he did not confine himself to mere words; he sent a British expedition to the

Tagus, with orders to resist Spanish and French interference. His action was perfectly successful. The Spanish and French did not venture to defy the British Foreign Minister; and Portugal, at least, was left to work out its destiny alone.

These few sentences will, perhaps, be sufficient to illustrate the progress of British Foreign Policy during the reign of George IV. In 1821 Europe, as Europe, had authorised Austria, as its agent, to repress revolution in Italy, and Lord Castlereagh had not resisted this proceeding. In 1822 Mr. Canning had prevented European interference in Spain, and in doing so had succeeded in breaking up the Holy Alliance. In 1826 he had forbidden interference in Portugal. He had invented, his admirers thought, the policy of non-intervention. It would have been much truer of him to have said that he was supporting the aspirations of nationalities. He would not allow the autocrats of Europe to stamp out the first symptoms of constitutional progress; and he accordingly forbade them to intervene.

Except in Greece, whose revolution will be more conveniently considered in connection with the Eastern policy of England, the principles which Mr. Canning had laid down received no new illustration till after the commencement of the reign of William IV. The folly of Charles X. and his advisers produced the uprising which is known in history as the Revolution of July, and which drove the elder branch of the Bourbons from the soil of France. The disturbance in France was followed by similar disturbances in other countries; and in Belgium especially the people rose against the arrangements which had been forced on them in 1815. It had been the policy

of the Allies in that year to strengthen the position of the Netherlands in Europe by uniting Holland and Belgium; but the union, like an ill-assorted marriage, had failed to answer its avowed purpose. The Belgians rose against the Dutch, and the King of the Netherlands, unable to suppress the revolt, appealed to the Allies to help him in his difficulty. Ten years before, only one answer would have been given to the appeal. The potentates of Europe would have told the Belgians that they could expect no reform except from the King of the Netherlands, and that it was their mission to support the king's authority. In 1830 such language was happily impossible. England had definitely become the opponent of autocratic intervention. The new King of the French, whose throne was due to revolution, naturally sided with England. The autocrats of Northern and Eastern Europe, harassed with their own difficulties, could not venture to resist the counsels of the two great Western Powers; and accordingly the Allies, instead of giving back Belgium in some shape or other to Holland, determined at once to assent to its separation. This is not the place to relate the history of the protracted negotiations which immediately ensued, and which ultimately secured the independence of Belgium. It is sufficient to state that the two Western Powers ultimately sent, the one an army the other a fleet, to Belgium, for the avowed purpose of driving the last Dutch garrison at Antwerp from Belgian territory.

Many persons in England were bitterly opposed to the policy which was thus pursued. They disliked operations which resembled war with Holland; they disliked still more the alliance with France; yet they

were powerless to resist the policy which the Whigs, with Lord Palmerston at the Foreign Office, were pursuing. Notwithstanding Waterloo and its consequences, and the dissatisfaction of the autocratic powers, Belgium was erected into an independent kingdom. Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, a prince whose first marriage had connected him with Great Britain, whose second marriage soon afterwards connected him with France, was placed on its throne, and the two great Western Powers, bent on a similar policy, drew closer together.

The consequences of this change were soon visible enough. In 1831 and 1832, while the Belgian question was still unsettled, revolution occurred in Central Italy. Austria, imitating on her own account the course which she had pursued ten years before as the agent of the Holy Alliance, strengthened her garrisons in Northern Italy and, at the request of the Pope, set her armies in motion, and entered the Romagna. A French squadron immediately seized the town of Ancona, and all Europe understood by the action that the Austrian advance must be stayed. The consequences were still more visible soon afterwards in the Spanish Peninsula. Both in Spain and in Portugal rival claimants disputed the throne. In each country the Constitutional party supported the claims of a little girl, who, in each, was justly regarded as the true heir to the throne; and, in each country, priests and Absolutists rallied in support of a prince, an uncle to the queen. In both countries, civil war was the result of these rival claims; and in both countries the war which thus occurred was at any-rate temporarily terminated by an alliance between England, France, and the Constitutionalists of Spain and

Portugal. With French and English help, Donna Maria was firmly seated on the throne of Portugal; Donna Isabella was placed on the throne of Spain; and Dom Miguel and Don Carlos agreed to evacuate the territory which they occupied.

The treaty under which these events were accomplished, and which is known in history as the Quadruple Alliance, fitly concludes the first period of Lord Palmerston's policy at the Foreign Office. It undoubtedly introduced a new principle into the relations of this country with other nations. Mr. Canning had actively interfered in 1826 to prevent Spanish and French intervention in the affairs of Portugal. Lord Palmerston had actively assisted the Belgians in 1831 and 1832 to liberate their territory from the Dutch. But in the first of these cases the force of England was employed to prevent the intervention of other powers; in the second of them, the forces of England and France were used to carry out the separation between Belgium and Holland, to which all Europe, including Holland itself, had assented. In 1834, however, Lord Palmerston interfered in the internal affairs of friendly countries. The influence of England was used, not with the view of preventing Russian or Austrian aid being given to Absolutism, but with the object of supporting a constitutional party against an autocratic party. Except that France and England were on the side of progress, and that Metternich was on the side of authority, there does not seem to be any difference in principle between the proceedings of the autocrats at Laybach in 1821, and the conclusion of the Quadruple Alliance in 1834. Both were based on the supposed rights of strong countries to intervene in the

affairs of weak countries; and it does not seem possible to distinguish logically between the principle of the two cases, because one interference was dictated by autocracy and the other was prompted by a desire for progress.

This conclusion—if it be correct—did not, however, attract much attention at the time. The established Governments both in Spain and Portugal were parties to the Quadruple Alliance; and the success of the allies appeared to justify the whole proceeding. Civil war, at any rate for the time, was terminated both in Spain and Portugal. "The moral effect of the treaty," as Lord Palmerston himself declared, cowed both Dom Miguel and Don Carlos; and the Spanish Peninsula was relieved from the terrible infliction of civil warfare.

Although it is logically impossible to defend the Quadruple Alliance and simultaneously to condemn the proceedings of Laybach, the Spanish policy of Lord Palmerston, if it had terminated in 1834, would have been probably excused because it was successful; unfortunately, however, every departure from a principle leads to greater deviations from the true path; and unfortunately, moreover, the state of affairs in Spain made further action necessary. It had been the object of the Quadruple Alliance to expel Don Carlos from Spain; and Don Carlos returned to Spain in the summer of 1834. He maintained for years a bloody, protracted, and doubtful war with the Spanish Constitutionalists; and Lord Palmerston again decided on active measures for his removal. At his instigation the Foreign Enlistment Act—an Act passed to prevent the enlistment of British subjects in the service of foreign powers—was suspended; a British legion, placed under

the command of Colonel Evans, a British officer well known afterwards both in the Camp and the Parliament as Sir De Lacy Evans, was enlisted in London to support the cause of Donna Isabella, the young Queen of Spain; a British force was ultimately stationed on the coasts of Spain, and allowed to render effectual assistance to the Constitutional armies; and by these and other expedients the war was ultimately decided, and Don Carlos, after years of bloodshed, was driven from Spain.

It would perhaps be difficult in strict principle to separate these proceedings from those which Lord Palmerston had already pursued in conjunction with France in 1834. If it were legitimate to form a Quadruple Alliance for the expulsion of Dom Miguel and Don Carlos from the Peninsula in 1834, it is impossible to demonstrate the impropriety of the proceedings which Lord Palmerston subsequently took from 1835 to 1840. But, in the management of foreign politics as in other matters, the wisest statesmen have always based their course not on strict principle but on expediency; and on the narrower ground of expediency there was the widest difference between the two cases. In the first place, in 1834, Lord Palmerston acted in conjunction with the other Constitutional Powers of Western Europe. He set in motion a moral force which was irresistible, and to which Don Carlos and Dom Miguel at once gave way. But from 1835 to 1840 he acted alone, or at the most with the alliance of the Spanish Constitutionalists. He had no moral force to lean upon, and the forces which were actually at his disposal were consequently insufficient for his purpose. It may no doubt be said that the success or failure of a particular operation is a bad test

of its merit. But it may be triumphantly answered that the only possible excuse for intervention in a civil war is the prevention of the bloodshed and waste which are the inevitable consequences of prolonged hostilities. It may be desirable for any casual passenger to interfere in a street broil and stop the disturbance. But there can be no object in his interference if it only feeds the riot. When Metternich interfered in Naples in 1821 his interference had at least this merit, he stopped the revolution. When the Duc d'Angouleme invaded Spain in 1823 his invasion had a similar justification—it stopped disorder. The Quadruple Alliance in 1834 was capable of the same defence—it terminated civil war. But the interference of Lord Palmerston after 1835 was not justified by success. It was open to the same objections as Metternich's proceedings, and it was not equally well managed. Like Tybalt in the play, Lord Palmerston fed the war which it was his first business, if he took part in it at all, to have stopped.

It is perhaps also right to add that the manner in which Lord Palmerston interfered was not free from objection. Something may probably be said for a statesman who lends to a struggling power the moral support of his influence; something also may be said for the statesman who deliberately plunges his country's forces into foreign quarrel. But it is difficult to see what excuse can be made for a minister who refrains from taking part in a fray, but encourages his fellow-countrymen, and even suspends the law to enable them, to do so. The force which Colonel Evans commanded in Spain in 1836 was productive of many of the inconveniences, and was not attended with any of the advantages, which

would have ensued from direct intervention. It committed this country, on the one hand, to a domestic quarrel in a foreign country; and it was not, on the other hand, strong enough for its work. There does not, in fact, seem to be any real difference between the force which Colonel Evans commanded in Spain in 1836 and the Russian contingent which took part in the Servian War of 1876; and a writer who is not prepared to approve the conduct of Russia in the latter year, has certainly no right to condone the conduct of Lord Palmerston in the former year.

But there was another objection to Lord Palmerston's Spanish policy from 1835 to 1841. From 1830 to 1834 he had achieved all his successes in conjunction with France; from 1835 to 1841 he was gradually estranged from his French allies. The estrangement seems, in the first instance, to have been due to the petty jealousies of the French and English ministers at the court of Madrid. Instead of acting in accord, they both identified themselves with particular politicians; and England in this way became associated with what Englishmen would call the advanced liberal party, while France was understood to support the moderate liberal party, in Spain. The difference which was thus created was unfortunately enhanced by the continued occupation of Algeria by France, and became still more acute in consequence of the Eastern policy of Lord Palmerston. It was hardly an exaggeration to say that in the summer of 1840 France and England were again within a measurable distance of war; and that the old animosities which centuries of warfare had created were rekindled in both countries, and burned as fiercely as ever.

Happily for the peace of the world, the fall of M. Thiers in France in 1840, and the fall of the Melbourne Ministry in England in 1841, afforded an adequate interval in which passion was able to cool. In France the policy of the new French Ministry was directed by M. Guizot; in England the foreign policy of the new government was regulated by Lord Aberdeen. Perhaps few people now recollect that Lord Aberdeen, the friend of Byron at the beginning of the century, the chief of the unfortunate Coalition Ministry in the middle of the century, occupied the Foreign Office for more than seven years. Perhaps fewer people could point to any great circumstance which distinguished his management of foreign policy. His administration was paled by the greater brilliance of Lord Palmerston's achievements. Yet, if peace be better than war, if cordial good feeling be preferable to misunderstanding, Lord Aberdeen's career at the Foreign Office was at least as meritorious as that of any of his predecessors. It may almost literally be said of him that he was occupied in assuaging the bitter feelings which Lord Palmerston had created. And in this task he was cordially assisted by the Duke of Wellington at home, and by M. Guizot abroad. "J'ai toujours dit," said the Duke to the French ambassador, "qu'on ne ferait rien de solide sans la France." It was M. Guizot's boast that, in three years, he had replaced distrust and hostility with cordial friendship.

Unfortunately the perfect accord which had subsisted between Lord Aberdeen and M. Guizot disappeared immediately after the fall of the Peel administration. The young Queen of Spain, who had been the subject of the intervention of 1834, had arrived at an age when

her marriage was possible. Her sister, heir-presumptive to her throne, only just younger than herself, was also ripe for marriage. The Queen of Spain was obviously the greatest heiress of the time; and the first men in Europe might naturally look with ambitious eyes towards an alliance which would place them on the throne of Ferdinand and Isabella. To France and England, still fettered by the traditions of an unfortunate past, the queen's choice seemed exceptionally important. England's policy during the preceding century had been opposed to the union of France and Spain. French statesmen during the same period had desired to draw the two countries closer together. The marriage, therefore, raised questions which bristled with difficulty; and, with rare prudence, Lord Aberdeen on the part of England, and M. Guizot on the part of France, talked the matter over, and came to an understanding upon it. Lord Aberdeen declared, on his part, that he could not consent to the queen's marriage with a son of Louis Philippe; M. Guizot declared, on his part, that he could only consent to the queen's marriage with a Bourbon prince descended from Philip V. of Spain. Each minister agreed to respect the stipulation of the other, and it was finally arranged that both France and England should agree in the recommendation that the Queen of Spain should marry a prince of the Spanish House of Bourbon, and that her sister, the Infanta, when the Queen was married and had children, should be married to the Duc de Montpensier, one of the younger sons of Louis Philippe. These arrangements would probably have been carried out if Lord Aberdeen had remained at the Foreign Office. They were set aside after his retirement by a variety of causes. Lord

Palmerston only partially approving the agreement, which his predecessor had made, desired to get rid of the Montpensier marriage in every event; and mentioned, in an official despatch, a prince, not a member of the Spanish House of Bourbon, as a possible husband for the queen. Louis Philippe, alarmed at the prospect of Lord Palmerston receding from the arrangement, to which Lord Aberdeen had consented, hurried on the Montpensier marriage with the Infanta, simultaneously with the queen's marriage with her cousin, the Duke of Cadiz. In so doing there can be no doubt that he broke his word; and that, in breaking it, he destroyed the *entente cordiale* which M. Guizot and Lord Aberdeen had promoted with such zeal. From thenceforward, till the close of his reign, France and England again acted apart; and the isolation of France was one of the causes which, eighteen months afterwards, drove the Orleans dynasty from its throne.

The ultimate consequences of the Spanish marriages were not, however, visible in 1846. M. Guizot, intoxicated by his own successes, "told the French Chambers that the Spanish marriages constituted the first great thing France had accomplished completely single-handed in Europe since 1830." Lord Palmerston, annoyed at his discomfiture, denounced them to the French *chargé d'affaires* in London as "l'acte le plus patent d'ambition et d'aggrandisement politique que l'Europe ait vu depuis l'Empire." Yet it may be doubted whether the opinions of both ministers were not rather due to passion and tradition than to calm reason. Lord Palmerston opposed the Spanish marriages because he was afraid of the union of France with Spain, and the consequent disturbance

of the balance of power in Western Europe. But it was obvious that the contingency, on which his whole opposition rested, was so remote, that it was hardly worth consideration. The Queen of Spain was a young girl. It was natural to expect that her marriage should be productive; and the birth of a single child would at once remove the cause of the minister's apprehensions. Even, however, if the Queen of Spain had no children, the Duc de Montpensier had older brothers; the chance of his succession to the throne of France was so remote as to be hardly worth considering. It would have been almost as reasonable for France to have prohibited the marriage of the Crown Prince of Prussia with the Princess Royal of England, on the ground that under certain circumstances it might lead to a union between Prussia and England, as for England to have prohibited the marriage of the Queen of Spain's sister with the Duc de Montpensier, on the ground that under certain circumstances it might lead to the union of France and Spain.

The full absurdity of Lord Palmerston's position, indeed, was only visible a year and a half afterwards, when the House of Orleans was driven from the throne of France, and the Duc de Montpensier's chances of the French throne were reduced to zero. It was then seen that Lord Palmerston had risked the possibility of war, and had revived the ill-feeling which centuries of warfare had created between France and England, for the purpose of preventing the alliance of Spain with a family which had only risen into importance from one revolution, and which had sunk into obscurity after another revolution.[1]

[1] The matter in the text has purposely been confined to the salient features of Lord Palmerston's foreign policy. But it must

Fortunately for England the events which occurred in France after the Spanish marriages tended gradually to restore good feeling between the two countries. The Prince, who successively became President of the French Republic and Emperor of the French, was anxious to gain for his dynasty the reputation which he rightly imagined that an English alliance would secure for it. With this object he actually succeeded in engaging England as his ally in a war with Russia. The place which that war occupies in the history of English foreign policy will be more properly shown in the succeeding chapter. In this chapter it is sufficient to observe that it was memorable as almost the first occasion in history in which a British and French army had fought side by side in a great Continental struggle.

While the war which then took place was either imminent or actually raging, a small political party, which had only lately sprung into importance, endeavoured to divert the British people from the policy into which they had gradually drifted. The most prominent member of this party was the late Mr. Cobden. Most

be recollected that in 1847 he interfered actively in Portugal; and that in 1848 he took the extreme course of suggesting to the Queen of Spain, through the British minister at Madrid, that she should enlarge the basis of her administration "by calling to her councils some of those men who possess the confidence of the Liberal Party." Imagine the Emperor of Russia in 1876 suggesting to the Queen, through the Russian ambassador in London, that she should enlarge the basis of the Beaconsfield Administration by calling to her councils Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville. The Spanish Government in 1848 treated the counsel in the manner in which an English ministry would have acted under similar circumstances. It took an early opportunity of forwarding the British minister his passports and requesting him to leave Spain.

people probably connect Mr. Cobden's name with the great struggle which he conducted to a successful issue for cheap bread; and, until a recent biography had drawn general attention to Mr. Cobden's career, perhaps few persons were aware that, before his name was familiar throughout England from his crusade against the Corn Laws, he had published an elaborate argument against the system of foreign policy which was fashionable among his fellow-countrymen, and had even gone so far as to declare that England could not "survive its financial embarrassments except by renouncing that policy of intervention with the affairs of other States which has been the fruitful source of nearly all our wars."

Mr. Cobden's views of foreign policy were twofold. In the first place he wished to terminate the system of intervention which Lord Palmerston was pursuing; in the next place he desired to supersede war by arbitration. Neither recommendation had the distinction of originality. From 1841 to 1846 Lord Aberdeen had pursued a policy of non-intervention at the Foreign Office; in 1845 he had proposed arbitration for the purpose of terminating a dispute with the United States. It may therefore be suspected that, if the government of Sir Robert Peel had remained in office, and Lord Aberdeen had continued responsible for the foreign policy of England, Mr. Cobden would have abstained from refurbishing his old arguments, and from suggesting a radical reform in the management of foreign policy. It was the unprecedented extreme to which Lord Palmerston pushed intervention, and the evident peril of war which his policy produced, that inspired Mr. Cobden's tongue and pen, and sharpened his arguments. It was long,

however, before his reasoning made any perceptible impression on the nation. Everyone, indeed, was ready to admit that, just as a suit in a law court is a better remedy for the private litigant than the ordeal of combat, the expedient of a previous age, so arbitration affords a happier and wiser solution of an international dispute than the savage decision of arms. But, at the same time, practical politicians demurred to the possibility of finding an acceptable and efficient arbitrator for the settlement of every international difference. The rare occasions, moreover, on which arbitration was attempted, did not result in any very remarkable success; and the blunt refusal of the United States to submit a disputed boundary to arbitration in 1845, proved that the remedy was not applicable to every difficulty, or at any rate acceptable to every disputant.

Mr. Cobden, then, did not succeed in inducing his fellow-countrymen to regard arbitration as the ultimate method of avoiding war in every case. It was some time before he was more successful in convincing them to refrain from the system of intervention to which Lord Palmerston had committed them. In one sense, indeed, his arguments with this object have never made any progress. Most people are now agreed that a foreign policy based on a system of non-intervention in every case would be as inexpedient as a foreign policy based on a system of constant interference. In diplomacy, as in other things, each question requires examination on its own merits; and the propriety of intervention must mainly turn on the interests which the country possesses in the matters in which it is required to intervene.

The first evidence of a change of feeling which was

producing a new policy was furnished during the disturbances which agitated Europe in 1848. Louis Philippe fled from France; revolution burst out in almost every European capital; and Lord Palmerston himself declared —though with some exaggeration—that only three powers in Europe remained "standing upright." Amidst the crash of thrones and the fall of dynasties, however, attention in England was chiefly directed to the events which occurred in Italy, in Austria, and in Hungary. Insurrection broke out in Lombardy in the beginning of March; the Austrian Army of Occupation driven from Milan retired gradually beyond the Mincio and the Adige; the King of Sardinia moved a force to support the Milanese; and the Venetians expelled their masters and established a Republic. In April 1848 Austrian rule in Italy was apparently terminated; and statesmen were speculating on the possibility of a permanent union between Piedmont and Lombardy.

Insurrection in Italy, however, was only one of the difficulties which Austria had to encounter. While her battalions were retiring across the Mincio, disturbances were occurring in Vienna. Prince Metternich—the most powerful of European statesmen—was forced to fly in disguise from the capital. As the year advanced fresh dangers crowded in rapid succession upon the Empire. Hungary rose against her on one side. The Italian States threw in their lot with the Lombard Insurrection. Even the Pope was forced by his subjects to declare against Austria. In the summer of 1848 it seemed no longer a question whether this or that province could be preserved to the Empire. The existence of Austria as an independent power was apparently endangered.

Throughout these stirring events, while despatches were being received every hour from every part of Europe, Lord Palmerston remained a "passive spectator." In April 1848 Austria sent a special mission to London to ask for his "good offices;" but Lord Palmerston declined to move. He privately advised the Austrians to retire from Italy; he privately advised them to induce their Emperor to abdicate; but he carefully abstained from all intervention. At the end of 1848 the Emperor Ferdinand abdicated in favour of the present Emperor Francis Joseph; at the beginning of 1849 the tide of fortune turned. Radetzky, by a decisive victory at Novara, restored Austrian authority in Lombardy. Soon afterwards Austrian legions, reinforced by 150,000 Russians, stamped out rebellion in Hungary. These drastic measures purged the Empire for a time of revolutionary troubles, and necessitated a new policy. Lord Palmerston, alarmed at the possibility of French interference in Italy, used his moral influence to obtain favourable terms for the Italian people. He could not prevent a French occupation of Rome; and he made no protest against Russian intervention in Hungary. He indeed showed his sympathy with the Italians; and he did not affect to conceal his sympathy with Kossuth; but he remained to the close of the struggle the "passive spectator" which he had constituted himself at the beginning of it.

Lord Palmerston's determination to abstain from interference will seem more marked if his policy towards France be taken into consideration. In February Louis Philippe fled from Paris; in March a provisional government, with M. de Lamartine at the head of it, was formed; in May the provisional government was suc-

ceeded by an executive commission elected by the National Assembly; in June the terrible struggle in the streets of Paris occurred, which led to a new constitution in November, and to the election of Napoleon as President of the Republic in December. Yet, throughout the whole period, Lord Palmerston not merely avoided intervention, but he succeeded in maintaining official communication with the successive Governments of France. He rigorously abstained from interference in the internal affairs of his powerful neighbour.

The change which was thus effected in Lord Palmerston's system of foreign policy was not due to any alteration in his opinions. He had not been converted by Mr. Cobden's arguments. He had interfered in Spain and Portugal in previous years, because intervention had appeared easy; he abstained from interference in France and Austria in 1848, because intervention then was dangerous. The doctrine of intervention, viewed under the glaring light shed upon it by the events of 1848-9, wore a new aspect. It seemed applicable enough in the case of weak powers; it was inapplicable in the case of strong powers.

It so happened that, before the risings of 1848 were forgotten, Lord Palmerston's original system of interference was to receive a fresh illustration. Many of the Hungarians who had been defeated by the allied arms of Austria and Russia took refuge in Turkish territory. Russia and Austria made a joint demand upon the Porte to deliver up the fugitives. The Sultan had the courage to refuse the demand; and Lord Palmerston, though he had some doubt whether he could rely on the support of his colleagues, "the Broadbrims of the Cabinet," as he

called them, determined to support the Turk. Lord Palmerston's policy prevailed; and, at his suggestion, the British and French fleets were sent to the Dardanelles to uphold the courage of the Porte. Sustained in this way by the Western Powers, the Sultan refused the Austrian and Russian demand; and, instead of surrendering the refugees, kept them in safe custody himself.[1] Since the days—twenty years before—when he had secured the independence of Belgium, Lord Palmerston had never taken a step which had obtained more general approval from his fellow-countrymen. His success, however, induced him to resort to a very different proceeding. Greece was almost the youngest of European monarchies; and Greece, under its new Government, had unfortunately been frequently the scene of disturbance. Such disturbances were felt beyond the narrow limits of the Greek frontier. Citizens of other nations resided in Greece; and the Greeks did not, in their disorders, respect either the persons or property of foreigners. A strip of land, required for King Otho's garden, was taken from Mr. Finlay, a Scotchman and British subject, and the claim which Mr. Finlay made for compensation was disallowed; Don Pacifico, a Jew of Gibraltar, and also a British subject, had his house gutted by a mob, and was unable to obtain compensation for the loss which he sustained.

For some years the British Foreign Office had urged Don Pacifico's claims on the Greek Government without

[1] They were not freed till the autumn of 1851. Lord Palmerston said that "a good deal of judicious bottle-holding was obliged to be brought into play" to secure their liberation. This remark gained him the name of the judicious bottle-holder.

success. Lord Palmerston in 1849 was of opinion that the fleet, which had done its work at the Dardanelles, might put a little pressure on Greece on its way home. It was ordered to Athens; and the admiral, in accordance with his instructions, seized and detained Greek vessels as security for the payment of the British claims on Greece. These high-handed proceedings naturally excited much indignation both on the Continent and in England. The French and Russian Governments were especially opposed to Lord Palmerston's conduct, and thought his armed interference unjustifiable. Even the House of Lords, by a majority of thirty-seven, expressed its regret "that various claims against the Greek Government, doubtful in point of justice or exaggerated in amount, have been enforced by coercive measures directed against the commerce and people of Greece, and calculated to endanger the continuance of our friendly relations with other powers:" and nothing but an exculpatory motion in the House of Commons averted the resignation of the Government or the retirement of the Foreign Minister. Men still recollect the memorable debate on this motion from the vigour and success with which Lord Palmerston defended his own conduct in the Foreign Office. It is more important for the historian to observe that even Lord Palmerston's apologists did not venture to ask the House to excuse his conduct in this particular conjuncture. They contented themselves with obtaining a general approval of the principles on which the foreign policy of the Government had been conducted.

The Don Pacifico debate, though it gave a new triumph to the minister, was destined to prove the con-

cluding incident in Lord Palmerston's tenure of the Foreign Office. It will perhaps be obvious from the short review in the preceding pages that he had carried the doctrine of intervention further than any of his predecessors. It will probably be also evident that he had shrunk in 1848 from applying the principles on which he had acted in previous years in Belgium, in Portugal, and in Spain. But, though in 1848 Lord Palmerston abstained from intervening in the foreign affairs of other nations, he resolved almost simultaneously on protecting the rights of British subjects abroad, with a vigour which had never been displayed by any previous minister. To use his own words: "As the Roman in days of old held himself free from indignity when he could say 'Civis Romanus sum,' so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong."

For the next few years the attention of diplomatists was chiefly directed to the events which either preceded, or were connected with, the Crimean War, and which will be more properly described in the succeeding chapter. Nearly ten years elapsed before Europe was otherwise disturbed by a great quarrel. The exact causes which produced the Franco-Austrian War of 1859 are still uncertain. Ever since Novara, indeed, France had seen with a regret—which she hardly affected to conceal—the predominance of Austria in Northern Italy. But there was no apparent reason why she should not tolerate for a little longer a state of things which she had endured for ten years. Some politicians, indeed, unable to discover any more open reason for the war, imagine

that the relations which Napoleon, in his earlier life, had enjoyed with the Secret Societies accounted directly for Orsini's attempt on his life in 1858, and indirectly for the Italian War of 1859. Whatever foundation may exist for these suspicions, it is at least evident that from the close of 1858 war was inevitable. The speech in which Napoleon, on the first day of 1859, expressed to the Austrian Ambassador his regret that the relations between the two empires were not more satisfactory only divulged an intention which had long been formed. From that moment, Austria massed troops in Lombardy; France pushed forward her preparations; and both countries prepared for a new struggle in Italy.

At the time at which these events took place the second ministry of Lord Derby was in office. But, almost at the moment at which war actually broke out, the ministry was defeated on the Reform Bill, and dissolved Parliament. The first serious battle of the war took place in the week in which the new Parliament met. The crisis on the Continent had perhaps more effect on the fortunes of the ministry at home than the fall of the Government produced on the policy of the country abroad. The people generally believed that Lord Derby and Lord Malmesbury, the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, were opposed to ideas of Italian unity; or, at any rate, zealous to support the predominance of Austria, the most conservative of Continental Powers. It has long since been known that there was no real basis for their suspicions. Lord Malmesbury had done his best, by remonstrating both at Paris and at Vienna, to preserve peace; and the utmost that could be said against him was, that he had proved himself—as the *Times*

called him—impartially helpless. Lord Malmesbury's presence at the Foreign Office, therefore, in no way affected the issue; and the fall of Lord Derby's administration, in the middle of the short Italian campaign, had similarly no effect upon it.

Both combatants, however, soon wearied of the war. Austria, worsted in the field, and threatened with possible disorders in Hungary, had obvious reasons for desiring peace; while France, dreading the intervention of other powers, wished to withdraw from the struggle before it was extended to other parts of Europe. In consequence, a war, which had only commenced in May, was concluded by an armistice in July; and the unexpected close of military operations naturally limited the results of the campaign. Before he commenced the war Napoleon had undertaken to free Italy to the Adriatic; he was satisfied to conclude the war on the annexation of Lombardy to Piedmont. Austrian archdukes were to be restored to Parma, Modena, and Tuscany; and the Italian States were to be formed into a confederation with the Pope at its head, in which Austria, through its possession of Venetia, was to receive a great, perhaps a preponderating, influence.

It was when the conditions became known that Lord Palmerston, for the last time in his life, exercised a decisive influence on the affairs of other nations. France had gone to war for the sake of achieving the independence of Italy. England, through Lord Palmerston, formally disapproved the conditions on which the war had ceased, because the independence of Italy was not accomplished by it. In consequence the strange result ensued that, while France had been the power which had

taken up arms for Italy, England was the nation which thenceforward became the champion of the Italian cause. It was England which protested against the restoration of Austrian archdukes to the duchies; it was England that supported the claim of Tuscans and Modenese for annexation to Piedmont; and it was England that enabled the Italians to get rid of the proposed confederation. Thus Italy owed more to England, which had remained at peace, than to France, which had gone to war in her behalf.

Unfortunately, however, the events of the Italian campaign had given rise to suspicions which had a serious effect on English politics. Lord Palmerston, disappointed with the terms on which France had made peace, learned to distrust the Emperor; the British people, alarmed at the rapidity with which France had hurled an army across the Alps, were frightened at the prospect of French aggressions. The annexation of Savoy to France naturally increased the distrust, while rumours of additions to the French fleet stimulated alarm, and at last excited a feeling of panic in England. Panic was unfortunately no new thing in England. The panic of 1859 had been preceded by panics in 1847 and 1853. The first of the three panics was terminated by the fall of Louis Philippe: the second by the Anglo-French alliance in the Crimean War; the third has left its visible monument in the Volunteer Force which has been enrolled in the defence of England. It is more to the purpose of the present chapter to point out that the distrust of France, which was created in 1859, naturally affected foreign policy on the next occasion when the peace of Europe was disturbed. The foundations of Italian

unity had been laid in 1859; the foundations of German unity were to be secured in 1863.

The duchies of Schleswig-Holstein had been united for four centuries to the kingdom of Denmark; but the title of the Danish crown to these territories had always rested on grounds distinct from those on which the remainder of Denmark was held. Holstein especially formed a part of Germany, and after 1815 the King of Denmark, as Duke of Holstein, held a seat in the German Diet. Amidst the roar of revolution, which resounded in Europe in 1848, the inhabitants of Holstein rose against the Danes; the people of Schleswig threw in their lot with Holstein, and Prussia supported the cause of the duchies. Prussia, however, soon withdrew from the war; the Danes, left to themselves, succeeded in suppressing the revolt in Schleswig; Austria and Prussia, by the Convention of Olmutz, decided on restoring order in Holstein; and finally, in 1852, a treaty signed at London settled the succession, both to Denmark and the duchies, on Prince Christian of Denmark, the present King of Denmark.

These arrangements had not been made without difficulty. The British Court was not satisfied with Lord Palmerston's desire to maintain the integrity of Denmark; and an objection which the Queen herself raised was actually overruled. The arrangements, moreover, had not the effect of preserving peace. The Duke of Augustenburg, who claimed the sovereignty of the duchies, was persuaded to renounce his rights. But the validity of the renunciation was disputed by his son. On the accession of Christian VII. to the throne of Denmark in 1863, the son entered Schleswig, and claimed the

throne of the duchies. His claim was supported by the joint forces of Austria and Prussia, and the Danish war commenced.

During these events, Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister, and Lord Russell held the seals of the Foreign Office. Both ministers were naturally anxious to preserve the arrangements made by the Treaty of London. In the last week of the session of 1863 Lord Palmerston expressed his desire to maintain the rights of Denmark. "We are convinced—I am convinced, at least"—he went on, "that if any violent attempt were made to overthrow those rights and interfere with that independence, those who made the attempt would find in the end that it would not be Denmark alone with which they would have to contend." Lord Russell had subsequently used language in his despatches which supported the impression conveyed by the Prime Minister, that, if Denmark were attacked, "the most serious consequences" would ensue. It is universally admitted that the language which was thus used gave confidence to the Danes, and prompted their resistance. Yet, when war actually broke out, England stood apart. She appealed, indeed, to France to help her in her difficulty, but the Emperor declined to go to war. The British Government shrank from a struggle in which England would have had to engage alone with the united forces of Prussia and Austria; and remained a passive spectator throughout the war.

These events, however, threw new light on the old system of intervention. There was no reason why England should have interfered for Denmark which did not apply to the other signatories of the Treaty of 1852.

Yet England had managed to play a part which every one looked upon as shabby, while France and Russia had throughout maintained a dignified and consistent reserve. This distinction was obviously due to the fact that England had used, while France had abstained from using, menacing language. Such language Lord Palmerston had frequently employed with success. Its failure in 1863 proved the danger inseparable from its use. Thus, at the close of Lord Palmerston's career, the public realised the possible perils of his favourite policy, and obtained a new reason for abstaining from interference. The easy victory of the Austrian-Prussian arms in Denmark was followed by consequences which few people had foreseen. Schleswig-Holstein had been nominally conquered for Germany, but Prussia showed little desire to evacuate Holstein. In consequence, a feeling of irritation gradually arose between Prussia and Austria. The latter power desired to invest the Duke of Augustenburg, whose claims had formed the nominal cause of the war, with the sovereignty of the duchies. Prussia was resolved to obtain Holstein for herself. At last, in 1866, Austria gave the signal for hostilities by persuading the German Diet to decree federal execution in Holstein. Prussia at once pronounced the German confederation dissolved, and declared war against Austria. Italy seized the opportunity for assailing the Italian possessions of the empire. In a few weeks, Prussian battalions overran the whole of Germany, while her chief armies, debouching on Bohemia, won a decisive victory at Sadowa, and forced Austria to sue for peace. The peace which was concluded at Prague excluded Austria from all German connections, and forced her to surrender Venetia;

it practically annexed the whole of northern Germany to Prussia; and made Prussia one of the most formidable of Continental powers.

These decisive events made a profound impression both in England and in France. Prussia, in obtaining supreme control in northern Germany, used a conqueror's rights to dispossess the King of Hanover of his hereditary dominions. Such an occurrence, thirty years before, must almost necessarily have produced war with England. The King of England was King of Hanover, and the people of England would have inevitably been drawn into a struggle which deprived their sovereign of his Continental territory. It was the especial good fortune of this country that the accession of a queen to its throne necessarily led to the separation of Hanover from it; it was, perhaps, equally fortunate that the prince who succeeded to the throne of Hanover was the least popular of George III.'s sons. The people of this country had long learned to take no interest in the affairs of a monarch who, as Duke of Cumberland, had acquired an exceptional unpopularity. The regret which they felt for the personal misfortunes of his helpless son—expelled, through no fault of his own, from his hereditary dominions—was mitigated by the reflection that the absorption of Hanover had prepared the formation of a united Germany.

While the short war occurred which gave Prussia supremacy in northern Germany, a ministerial crisis took place in this country. Seven years before, the occurrence of the Franco-Austrian war had undoubtedly helped to precipitate the fall of Lord Derby's second ministry. The outbreak of the Austro-Prussian War in 1866 did not prevent the formation of Lord Derby's third adminis-

tration. It was generally felt that the country had no concern with the work which was being carried out in Germany; and that neither Conservative nor Liberal would have any temptation to interfere in it.

This feeling, however, was not shared in France. There the proof which Prussia had given of military power was universally supposed to threaten French independence. It had been the policy of France for centuries to weaken Germany by dividing it; and a short war had strengthened Germany by consolidating it. Many Frenchmen blamed Napoleon for not throwing in his lot with Austria. Almost every Frenchman looked forward to a trial of strength between France and Germany. Napoleon, in 1870, made the election of a prince of the House of Hohenzollern to the throne of Spain the pretext for a quarrel. He actually went so far as to require an undertaking that no Hohenzollern prince should sit on the Spanish throne. The condition refused, he declared war. The events of this war are within the memory of all of us. Within a few weeks, France was decisively defeated; her Emperor a prisoner. Within a few months Paris was taken; peace made with a French republic; and France stripped of two provinces—Alsace and Lorraine, which she had held since the days of Louis XIV.

Throughout these events this country maintained a steady neutrality. At the commencement of the war the majority of Englishmen thought Germany in the right, and sympathised with her in her trials. Towards the close of the war most Englishmen thought the Germans harsh in their conduct, and sympathised with France in her troubles. But, whether they sympathised

with France or with Germany, they were equally resolved to abstain from interference, and to leave the struggle to be fought out to its bitter end by the combatants alone.

This chapter will have been written with very little purpose if the reader fails to perceive a clear distinction between the events which are the subject of it and those which are related in the preceding chapter. It may be briefly stated that, up to the close of the eighteenth century, diplomatists had almost exclusively been occupied with the interests of dynasties, while, during the nineteenth century, they have been chiefly concerned with the problem of nationalities. This distinction has been specially visible in the long chapter of European history which commenced with the war of 1859, and was concluded with the war of 1870. The four wars which took place in this period worked out the problems of German and Italian nationality. If men will occupy themselves with bloodshed, it is, at any rate, some advance to find them fighting for the interests of nations and not the mere interests of princes.

This chapter will have been written with equally little purpose if it has failed to emphasise with sufficient distinctness the gradual progress of British Foreign Policy from 1815 to the present time. It may be briefly stated that this country under Castlereagh allowed the autocrats of Europe to carry out the principles of the Holy Alliance; that under Mr. Canning it forbade the interference of autocracy in the internal affairs of other States; that under Lord Palmerston it actively interfered to promote the cause of constitutional progress; and that for the last thirty years, in Western Europe at any rate, it has adopted the policy of non-

intervention. The modern Foreign Minister, in one sense, may be said to have resuscitated the policy of Lord Castlereagh. But Lord Castlereagh stood by while autocracy riveted its fetters on the people of Europe; the modern Minister stands by while nationalities shake off the chains which autocracy has imposed on them.

During the same period the balance of power has been so frequently altered that war for such an object would seem inappropriate to every one. The old phrase—the balance of power—which was continually in the mouths of our ancestors, really meant that in their judgment the balance of power should always incline against France. The course of events has turned France from an enemy into an ally, and has simultaneously weakened, and is perhaps still weakening, French influence in the counsels of Europe. France, deprived of the fortresses on her eastern frontiers, has no longer the same capacity for offensive warfare which she originally enjoyed. The rapid increase of the population in Great Britain, and the slower growth of the French people, have removed the disparity of numbers which gave Napoleon one of his chief advantages in the commencement of the century.

CHAPTER III.

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF ENGLAND TOWARDS AMERICA AND RUSSIA.

THERE is a famous passage in his work on Democracy in America in which De Tocqueville has dwelt on the possible consequences of the growth of the United States in the west, and of Russia in the east. This calm thinker seriously apprehended that these two gigantic powers, ever advancing their huge territories, might ultimately prove a menace and a danger to all other nations in the world. An Englishman reading the passage ought perhaps to reflect that England possesses as much territory as is contained in the Russian Empire, and that the Queen of England reigns over four times as many subjects as the Czar of Russia. He is almost certain, at the same time, to remember that the dangers which may arise from the increasing territory of Russia or the growing wealth of the United States, are more likely to affect the scattered dominions of England than a compact country like France.

There can, indeed, be no question that the extraordinary conquests which England succeeded in making in the middle of the eighteenth century have had the effect of exposing the British Empire to fresh dangers, and of gradually modifying the foreign policy of England. The defeat of the French by Clive and Coote in India,

and the defeat of Montcalm by Wolfe at Quebec, made England the mistress of the East, and the proprietor of Northern America. But the consequences of these events were invisible to the victors. Timidity was not a common quality in an English statesman of the eighteenth century; but, even if it had been, the most timorous statesman could hardly have expected danger to the newly-acquired dominions of the East India Company from the remote and disorganised territory which obeyed the sway of the Czar of Russia. Britain, the sole owner of Northern America from the Arctic Circle to the Spanish colonies of Texas and Mexico, could no longer be said to have a rival in the New World. The full consequences of the vast acquisitions which Britain had thus made were not visible for more than fifty years afterwards. It was then seen that France and England, no longer rivals either in the East or in the West, had lost one of the chief reasons for their mutual jealousy; but it was also clear that new sources of peril to the British Empire had been discovered. England, in America, had a foreign policy to initiate. England, in India, has learned to regard with some alarm the advance of Russia towards her northern frontiers.

A foreign policy in the New World became inevitable from the moment when George III. and his ministers agreed to recognise the independence of the thirteen colonies which the follies of British statesmen had driven into revolt. But happily for the United States, as well as for this country, the Foreign Office never applied to America the system of foreign policy which it pursued in Europe. Mr. Cobden was never tired of expatiating on the inconsistencies of statesmen who thought it necessary to inter-

fere, for the sake of British interests, in the internal affairs of Portugal or Spain, and who never dreamed of interfering with the same objects in the internal affairs of the Great American Republic. Yet, at least on three separate occasions, differences, which either led to or nearly resulted in war, arose between this country and the United States; and no review of British foreign policy would be complete which omitted to mention them.

The first and most important of these disputes arose from the Continental policy of the great Napoleon. Bent on subduing this country, which he recognised as his most persistent opponent, Napoleon endeavoured to crush the trade of the British Empire. His famous Berlin and Milan decrees declared England to be in a state of blockade, prohibited all intercourse with her, and pronounced all goods of British origin to be lawful prize. These orders, therefore, virtually prohibited all trade with England. The British Government retaliated by prohibiting all trade with France and her European possessions which did not pass through England. The policy of the two belligerents, of course, affected all the neutral powers; and America, whose trade was continually expanding, naturally resented a system which threatened the annihilation of her commerce. Her irritation was increased by the policy of England in another matter. All sailors, subjects of the Crown, were liable to be seized and forced to serve on British men-of-war. The commander of an English man-of-war had a right to board any merchant vessel, and seize and carry off any British sailors required for the king's service. British men-of-war not merely seized British sailors serving on British vessels; they also searched the

merchant vessels of other nations, and seized any British sailors whom they found upon them. It is not surprising that the Americans should have resented these proceedings, or that the resolution of the British Government to continue them should have led to hostilities. A war, in which England had not even the satisfaction of success, broke out between the two countries and lasted for two years. It was happily terminated by the Treaty of Ghent in 1814,[1] and peace between America and England was not interrupted or endangered for another twenty-five years.

During the whole period, however, a cause of discord which was continually ripening into maturity was suffered to remain unremedied. In 1783 Great Britain had consented to recognise the independence of the United States; but from 1783 to 1846 the English and American Governments were unable to agree on the precise line of frontier between the adjoining nations. Commissioners appointed on both sides to settle the matter were unable to arrive at a decision upon it; the arbitration of a foreign sovereign was resorted to and failed; and the growing density of the population in the State of Maine on the disputed frontier gave a constantly-increasing importance to the dispute. While this difference

[1] Few treaties have ever had such important consequences as the Treaty of Ghent. It was memorable enough as the means of restoring peace between America and England. But it was also memorable because, if it had not been signed, the Duke of Wellington would have been in America in June 1815 in command of the English army. But for the Treaty of Ghent, therefore, the Allies in Flanders would not have been under the Duke's command in 1815; the battle of Waterloo would probably have not been fought; and the whole course of European history might possibly have been altered.

was becoming more and more acute, the attempts of a British ministry to govern Canada from the Colonial Office produced a Canadian rebellion. Civil war could not occur in Canada without causing complications on the frontier line. Some Americans who sympathised with the Canadians chartered a steamer, the *Caroline*, and employed her in supplying with stores a body of insurgents who had seized a small wooded island on the Niagara river, immediately above the Falls. A zealous British officer fitted out a night attack, seized the *Caroline* in American waters, set her on fire, and sent her, a blazing wreck, over the Falls. Opinion in the United States was excited to an extraordinary degree by this occurrence, and war was only avoided by the conciliatory conduct of the American authorities. The case of the *Caroline*, however, was not ended. A few years afterwards a Canadian named M'Leod, visiting the State of New York, had the folly to boast that he had taken part in the attack on the *Caroline*. He was arrested by the State authorities, and put on his trial for the murder of an American citizen who had lost his life on the occasion. News of this arrest created in England more excitement than the burning of the *Caroline* had produced in America. Lord Palmerston, speaking as foreign minister, declared that war—immediate war—would follow M'Leod's conviction. But Lord Palmerston, in making the declaration, was in common consistency forced to acknowledge, what he had hitherto studiously declined to admit, that the destruction of the *Caroline* was a national act, for which England was responsible; and not merely the act of an individual, for which she had no responsibility. M'Leod's acquittal removed the

immediate cause of war, but Lord Palmerston's admission gave the American Government a new cause of complaint against this country.

Differences rarely come singly. A third dispute was soon imported into the quarrel. For the sake of suppressing the slave trade this country maintained a considerable naval force on the West Coast of Africa; it succeeded in persuading many other countries to empower their cruisers to search suspected vessels under their several flags for slaves. The United States refused to be a party to these treaties, and it was admitted on both sides that no mutual right of search existed. It was soon, however, discovered by the slavers of other nations that they could avoid the inconvenience and consequences of search by hoisting an American flag; and as an American flag was purchasable for a few shillings they freely resorted to this expedient. The officers in command of the British squadron, finding their efforts frustrated by this device, invented a new doctrine. They declared that, though they had no right to search an American vessel, they had a right to visit a vessel carrying the American flag to see whether she were really an American vessel or not. This claim threw new heat on the smouldering controversy which already existed. The American Government declared that it was impossible to distinguish between the right of visit and the right of search. Lord Palmerston stoutly maintained the position of his own officers; and when the Melbourne ministry retired in 1841, a correspondence, which was continually becoming warmer, was still in progress between the two governments on the subject.

Reference has already been made in the preceding

chapter to the distinguished part which Lord Aberdeen played in restoring harmony between France and England. He deserves equal credit for the successful efforts which he made to remove the causes of difference which divided the United States from his own country. Lord Ashburton was sent out to America with full power to arrange every dispute; and he succeeded in settling the three questions which were apparently of most importance. The Maine boundary question was compromised; the right of visit was abandoned; and Lord Ashburton had the good sense to express his regret that circumstances should have led to the violation of the territory of the United States by the seizure of the *Caroline*. Notwithstanding the indignation and efforts of Lord Palmerston, the British ministry, the British legislature, and the British people, approved the conciliatory tone which Lord Ashburton had used, and peace was apparently firmly established between the United States and England.

Unfortunately it is easier to disturb peace than to restore it. All the concessions which the British and American Governments had made to each other proved powerless to allay the irritation which had arisen between the two nations. Lord Ashburton had succeeded in terminating a contest which had already lasted for sixty years, and in defining the frontier line between the two countries on the east. But the Maine boundary dispute, as it was called, was no sooner settled than a much larger question was raised as to the limits of States and Colony on the extreme west. Originally the nominal possessions of the Spanish Crown had touched the territory of Russia, on the Pacific coast of North America.

But latterly Spain had exercised no rights over the whole coast-line from the 42d to the 54th parallel of northern latitude. The whole of this immense territory was claimed both by England and the United States; and the two countries in 1818 made an agreement, which was afterwards renewed from year to year, for its joint occupation. The most important portion of the territory was the vast watershed of the Columbia River, and this district proved the chief cause of difference. The English proposed that the dispute should be compromised by running the boundary-line along the 49th parallel to the Columbia River, and down the course of the Columbia to the Pacific; the Americans, on the contrary, wished to compromise the dispute by making the 49th parallel the boundary of the two countries. Ultimately the 49th parallel was accepted as the boundary on the Continent; but the whole of the great Island of Vancouver, which is nearly bisected by the parallel, was ceded to Britain.[1] Even this agreement was not made till England and the United States had drifted within a measurable distance of war. The Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary of the most peaceful Cabinet of the present century openly declared in their places in Parliament that war was a possible contingency; and nothing but the most conciliatory management averted hostilities. From the termination of the Oregon dispute in 1846 to the outbreak of civil war in America, no question of real importance divided the two countries.

[1] This settlement led in its turn to a fresh dispute as to the precise channel between the mainland and Vancouver's Island, which was to be the future boundary. This dispute was ultimately settled by arbitration, under the Treaty of Washington.

The circumstances which resulted from the American civil war are so recent that it is not probably necessary to describe them in any detail. The war naturally produced many complications, which could not easily have been avoided. The most industrious portion of the United Kingdom was dependent for the raw material on which its industry depended on the Southern States of America. The blockade of the southern ports cut off the supply of cotton; and a population numbered by millions experienced in consequence the miseries of famine. So terrible a disaster naturally created profound feeling throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain. The North in fighting the South was inflicting losses upon England; and the interest of England—so many persons thought—suggested a policy of intervention. Steps were taken both in America and England to promote the feeling. In America the Confederate Government decided on sending two gentlemen—Messrs. Mason and Slidell—to Europe, for the purpose of informally representing its interests in Paris and London. In England Confederate agents succeeded in purchasing some fast steamers, to be equipped as cruisers, and to be employed in preying on American merchantmen. Each of these resolutions very nearly produced war. An officer of the Federal Government—Captain Wilkes—boarded the British mail-packet on which Messrs. Mason and Slidell were coming to Europe, and carried them away. No nation could have allowed such an occurrence to pass unnoticed. The British ministry demanded the immediate release of the two gentlemen who had been arrested, and enforced its demand by despatching troops to Canada. Fortunately

these military preparations proved unnecessary. The Government of the United States formally disapproved the action of its officer, and released the prisoners; and an outrage which at one moment seemed likely to lead to serious consequences was forgotten.

It would have been happy, both for the United States and for England, if the other difficulty which arose out of the American civil war had terminated with equal ease. The Confederate Government, in its gallant effort to secure the independence of the Southern States, naturally adopted every means at its disposal for crippling the commerce of its enemy. In England there were many people who wished it success; there were many other persons ready to supply with goods any customer who had either money or credit. In no other country could ships be built with equal ease, with equal speed, or with equal economy. A large English shipbuilder undertook to build a fast cruiser for the Confederate Government. Suspicion soon fell on the vessel, and the Minister of the United States formally applied to the British Government for its detention. The British Government referred the application to the law officers, one of whom, the Queen's advocate, happened to be seriously ill, and the case, on which an urgent opinion ought to have been given, was delayed. In the meanwhile, taking advantage of the delay the vessel sailed on a trial trip; it is hardly necessary to add she never returned from her trial. Receiving guns, stores, equipment, name, in mid-ocean, she commenced a cruise which made her the terror of American merchantmen, and which won for her fame, or notoriety, in every portion of the globe.

There can be no doubt that a large number of persons in

this country sympathised with the deeds of the *Alabama*, and sincerely wished her success. They hardly foresaw the ultimate results of the career of the cruiser. The Government of the United States threw on England the responsibility for the losses which their merchant navy had experienced; and after the end of the war a protracted correspondence arose between the two countries on the subject. Successive British Foreign Ministers wrote some very long, some very able, and—as their admirers thought — some very convincing despatches, to prove that the British Government had taken every reasonable precaution to prevent an infringement of the law. All their arguments could not remove the damaging fact that the *Alabama* had been allowed to sail, and that she ought not to have been allowed to sail. At last a Liberal minister concluded that it was undesirable to protract an irritating dispute of this character. By the Treaty of Washington it was decided that the claim of the United States should be referred to arbitration. This famous treaty set out with an expression of regret on the part of England, that the *Alabama* and other vessels which had committed depredations on American commerce had been allowed to escape from British ports. It proceeded to lay down three new rules, under which the parties to the treaty declared that neutral powers were bound to use due diligence to prevent the fitting out or departure of armed cruisers from their shores; and were required to refuse one belligerent the use of their waters as a basis of operations against the other. It engaged that the *Alabama* claims should be referred to five arbitrators, who should have regard in their award to these new rules; and it concurrently

provided for the settlement of other outstanding differences between the two countries. The arbitrators, to whom the matter was referred, gave an adverse decision to England, and assessed the damage of the United States at about £3,000,000. The money was at once paid; a period of almost unexampled prosperity made its payment easy; but it was none the less true that the unfortunate delays which had taken place in 1863 had cost this country £3,000,000.

The settlement of this dispute was regarded with mixed feelings in this country. Many people disliked the notion of trying the conduct of England by *ex post facto* rules made for the purpose, and would have much rather sanctioned the expenditure of £30,000,000 in maintaining an unjust position than the outlay of £3,000,000 in surrendering it. The manner in which the Commissioners who negotiated the Treaty of Washington did their work unfortunately tended to strengthen this feeling. The Commissioners, anxious to conclude a treaty, did not stop to weigh sufficiently the meaning of the words which they used, and thus gave the United States an opportunity for contending that the British Government had actually consented to recognise its liability to pay not only the direct losses of American merchantmen, but the indirect losses which their commerce had sustained from the increased insurance risks which the underwriters had exacted. But, though a considerable party in the State disliked the treaty and the arbitration which resulted from it, a still larger party warmly approved the whole proceeding. The readiness to acknowledge a wrong, and the willingness to atone for it, seemed to this party a feature in British foreign

policy as agreeable as it was new; and the first successful reference of an international dispute, of great importance, to arbitration seemed to afford fresh prospects of preserving the peace of the world.

Since these events occurred no serious question has arisen to interrupt the harmony fortunately established between the two great English-speaking countries on either side of the Atlantic. Both of them are continually increasing in influence and importance. The Queen of England reigns over dominions as extensive, and four times as populous, as the Russian Empire. The President of the United States is the head of the most flourishing and most advancing community on the face of the globe. The wealth of the United States, and the energy of their people, are thought by some persons to threaten the commercial supremacy which England has gained. But neither commercial jealousy nor former differences have interfered with the good understanding which is fortunately established between the two nations. Every year draws the two people more closely together. The throb of the electric cable, which carries to one nation the thoughts of the other; the steam fleet, which comes and goes over the waters of the ocean with a regularity which is hardly exceeded by its tides, have linked and are linking the two countries in closer dependence on each other. The cotton-spinners of Northern England, who rely for their raw material on the Southern States; the farmers of the far west, dependent for their market on the ever-increasing demand for corn in this country; the commercial classes of both nations, in constant communication with one another, are all interested in promoting peace. Where nations are set on peace, diplo-

macy usually succeeds in terminating every difficulty without resort to war.

That will be a happy day for England on which the statesman is able to contemplate the horizon on the East with the same satisfaction with which he watches the Western sky. Unfortunately, if the setting sun bear with it a message of goodwill, the rising sun is still red with possible peril. In the West, statesmen and people, recognising a community of interest, are at peace. In the East, statesmen and people, dreading a possible rivalry, are suspicious and uneasy. The extraordinary conquests which gave this country possession of India in the middle of the eighteenth century were productive of two consequences. They removed the last cause of real difference between France and England, but they paved the way for future differences between England and Russia. The mighty northern empire, which was continually extending its boundaries, threatened, it was thought, to swallow up Hindostan itself, and a battle for the supremacy of the East, in the heart of Central Asia, seemed a possible contingency to alarmed politicians.

The alarm which was felt at the advance of Russia was founded partly on truth, partly on error. The error was occasioned by an almost universal ignorance of the geography of Central Asia. It was rebuked on one occasion by a distinguished statesman, who had the good sense to advise his fellow-countrymen to study large scaled maps. Unluckily, large scaled maps of Central Asia are hardly procurable, and the ordinary Englishman is consequently compelled to content himself with maps which give him an imperfect apprehension of the vast distances which Russia has still to traverse before

she reaches the boundaries of India, or of the character of the deserts which obstruct her progress. But, in addition to this prevalent misconception, there is a truth which stimulates and explains the alarm which is felt at the advance of Russia. The Russian Empire is the only great country which has literally no outlets under its own absolute control. The White Sea is only open for a certain portion of each year; the traffic of the Baltic Sea must pass through a narrow Strait or Sound; and every ship which sails out of the Black Sea must pass under the guns of Constantinople. Yet these three precarious and difficult gates are literally the only maritime outlets for the commerce of eighty millions of people. No other community on the face of the globe would have tolerated such a state of things with so much patience as the Russians have displayed in submitting to it. As surely as the river seeks the ocean, so does every great people gravitate towards its natural outlet—the sea. It may be possible to direct its march, just as it is practicable to turn the course of a river. It would be as easy to stop the river as to arrest the nation.

Every Englishman is conscious that he would have never tolerated, in the case of his own country, the exclusion to which Russia is still condemned. Every Englishman, therefore, who infers the aspirations of other nations from a sense of his own opinions presumes that Russia will continue to advance till she reaches the ocean. The Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, the Pacific Ocean, are the objective points of her constant progress. Success in two of these directions will place her east and west of the British Empire in India; success in the other direction will place her on the flank of the communications

between Great Britain and India. British supremacy in the East seems consequently threatened by the advance of the Russian Empire; and this impression has become so strong that it has for forty years been the dominating influence in British foreign policy.

It would indeed be a grave error to suppose that the whole of the British people are unanimous in thinking that the advance of Russia is a menace to Britain which must at any price be stayed. On the contrary, two sections of the British people have for years entertained opposite opinions on the subject. One section has regarded the progress of Russia as a certain danger; but another section has welcomed it as a probable benefit. Bad as the Russian Government in many respects is, it is infinitely superior, so the latter thought, to the savage organisations which it is gradually absorbing. They pointed out that a rude and imperfect civilisation follows its banners; that a primitive but improving trade is promoted by its victories; and that progress, a slow but no less certain progress, attends its conquests. They declare that it must be advantageous to replace the disorganisation of an Asiatic tribe with the organised machinery of an European autocracy; and that the British Government may contemplate without dismay, the British merchant may look forward with satisfaction to, the day when the boundaries of the Russian and the British Empires meet on the head waters of the Indus, or in the passes of the Hindoo Koosh.

An opinion of this kind, however, which it has been attempted to indicate in the preceding paragraph, has only hitherto been embraced by a minority of the British people, and by a still smaller minority of British states-

men. The mass of the public and the majority of politicians have adopted a very different conclusion, and have regarded the advance of Russia as a danger to be stayed at any cost. In their judgment there was one obvious manner in which its course could be stayed. The Turk is still encamped on the rich European and Asiatic territory which was won by the valour of his ancestors from the unfortunate inheritors of the Second Roman Empire. The progress of Russia, towards the Mediterranean at any rate, can only be obtained by victories over the Turk; and if the Turk can be secured in his dominions the Russian cannot possibly advance. In consequence, for the greater part of the present century, the maintenance of the Turk has been the favourite object of British politicians. It has been the pivot on which British foreign policy has turned. A large number of Englishmen believe at this moment that the supremacy of Britain in the East cannot be maintained unless the rule—the admittedly odious rule—of the Turks at Constantinople is preserved.[1] This conclusion has led to a singular anomaly. The government of Turkey is admitted on all sides to be the worst in Europe. The authority is exercised by a minority which has entrenched itself among a majority alien to it in race, religion, and language. The peoples

[1] Gibbon observes that "by the vulgar of every rank (in the eleventh century) it was asserted and believed that an equestrian statue in the square of Taurus, was secretly inscribed with a prophecy how the Russians, in the last days, should become masters of Constantinople," and he adds that perhaps the present generation may yet behold the accomplishment of the prediction, of a rare prediction, of which the style is unambiguous and the date unquestionable. *Hist. of Decline and Fall*, vol. x. p. 233. A century has passed since this passage was penned; and the famous prophecy, which every generation has expected to see fulfilled, still remains without fulfilment.

who are thus subjected to a dominant class are continually conspiring against the rule of their masters; and they turn with anxious eyes to the Western Powers of Europe for material, or at least moral, support in their struggle for independence. They usually turn in vain. England, which in every other part of Europe has supported or sympathised with struggling nationalities, refuses to afford either material or moral support to the struggling nationalities of Eastern Europe. She imagines that if the Sclavonic populations of Turkey obtained their independence, Russia, sprung from a common ancestry with themselves, would exercise a predominating influence over their counsels. The disorganised condition of Greece induces her to infer that the Greeks, even with an extended territory, can never be strong enough to replace the Turks; her own interests seem, therefore, identified with the maintenance of the Ottoman power unimpaired; and her statesmen, who, in other parts of Europe, identify themselves occasionally with the cause of oppressed nationalities, are bent on supporting a military minority in European Turkey.

There have, indeed, always been, as there still are, statesmen in England who have adopted a different policy. They have refused to believe that the true interest of England could be dependent on the maintenance of an odious government in a beautiful country—a government under which, as Mr. Cobden observed, "not one furlong of canal or navigable stream, the labour of Turkish hands, has been produced in upwards of three hundred years;" they have refused to believe that self-government—the most beneficial of schoolmasters elsewhere—would be a powerless agent in Eastern Europe,

and they have declined to assent to the perpetuation of a cruel tyranny for the sake of strengthening the position of their own country in the Mediterranean. These views have, on one occasion at any rate, commended themselves to the mass of the people; and the Electors in 1880 decided to reverse the old system of foreign policy which had made the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire the object of diplomacy.

There are perhaps only a few people who have carefully considered the extreme repugnance with which an alliance with the Turk would have been regarded by their ancestors. Francis I., indeed, was driven by his necessities to contemplate an alliance with Turkey. Cardinal Pole regarded Mahometan help as possible to stamp out the heresies which in his eyes seemed more detestable than even the Mahometan religion. But these were only exceptional expedients, which were always regarded with horror. They never commanded general approval; and a hundred and fifty years after Cardinal Pole's time, when Louis XIV. repeated the experiment of Francis I., "the whole civilised world" (in the strong language of a modern statesman) "rang with indignation at the infamous and unnatural combination." Long after the time of Louis XIV. no English statesman would have ventured to propose an alliance with the Turk. The Turk was still regarded as the enemy of Christendom.

Events, however, had already occurred which were slowly producing a different policy. Soon after the commencement of the eighteenth century, Russia, victor at Pultowa, obtained undisputed predominance in Northern Europe. Soon after the middle of the eighteenth century, Clive, victor at Plassey, laid the foundations of the

British Empire in Hindostan. In 1774 the Peace of Kainardji transferred the command of the Crimea from Constantinople to St. Petersburg, and placed the inhabitants of Wallachia and Moldavia, as well as the Greek Church, which it was decided should be erected in Constantinople, under the immediate protection of Russia. In 1783 the Crimea was formally annexed to Russia. Eight years afterwards, Pitt, alarmed at the progress of Russia southwards, and especially at the capture of Ockzakow, proposed to send help to Turkey. Although Pitt, when he made this famous proposal in 1791, was at the height of his power, while the Whigs, led by Burke and Fox, were in an impotent minority, the latter, stimulated by the massive eloquence of Mr. Burke, and assisted by the rising ability of Lord Grey, who was just commencing his Parliamentary career, actually succeeded in compelling the minister to abandon his project. Burke declared that "any Christian power was to be preferred to these destructive savages"—the Turks; and the House of Commons and the country were contented to look on without alarm at the decay of the Ottoman Empire, and to watch equally without alarm the gradual absorption of Turkish territory by Russia. In 1792 the Peace of Jassy advanced the Russian boundary to the Dniester.

The whirlwind which passed over Europe immediately afterwards diverted attention from the East. England, struggling against France, was the ally of Russia; and for more than a generation little or no attention was paid to the progress of Russia southwards. Yet Russia continued to advance, and in 1812 the Peace of Bucharest extended her frontiers to the Pruth.

So far the progress of Russia had been effected without resistance from this country. Pitt's failure in 1791 was fresh in the memory of politicians, and no British statesman would have ventured to suggest the despatch of a single frigate, or the expenditure of a single shilling, in aid of the Turks against the Russians. In 1821 a fresh series of events threatened the disruption of the Turkish Empire. An insurrection broke out in Greece, and the inhabitants of Moldavia and Wallachia rose against Turkey. These occurrences provoked and perhaps necessitated exceptional measures on the part of the Turks. Wherever the Ottoman obtained a victory over the insurgents, insurrection was stamped out with merciless cruelty. In defiance of the Treaty of Kainardji, the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia were occupied by Turkish troops; in defiance of the same treaty the Greek churches at Constantinople were demolished, and the Greek Patriarch was hanged.* Without thought for the consequences to Russian trade, the Dardanelles were closed, and the commerce of Odessa threatened with extinction.

In consequence of these events Turkish statesmen had two grave matters to deal with. The Greek insurrection, which had been the original cause of trouble, still taxed the resources of the Ottoman Empire. But the steps which the Porte had taken to crush the rebellion had produced a more serious danger. They had caused an infraction of the treaties with Russia, and they threatened the annihilation of Russian trade. The relative importance of these two questions was regarded in a very different way in London and St. Petersburg. In London, Mr. Canning was disposed to sympathise with the efforts

which the Greeks were making to obtain their freedom; but he was distrustful of the merit of the complaints which the Russian Government was making against the Porte. He thought—as many of his successors have thought—that Russia was availing herself of a Greek insurrection to promote her own influence in European Turkey; and he concluded that the insurgents were wittingly or unwittingly playing a Russian game. Impressed with the view, he endeavoured to restrict the limits of the insurrection, and busied himself to mediate between St. Petersburg and the Porte. But the real views of Alexander of Russia were very different from those with which Mr. Canning credited him. The soul of the Holy Alliance, he hated insurrection in Greece as much as he hated it elsewhere. In the whole of his negotiation with Turkey he saw nothing but the infraction of the Treaty of Kainardji and the annihilation of the Odessa trade; and he regarded the Greek insurrection as a disagreeable incident which compromised his policy in Western Europe. During the whole of his reign these considerations affected his policy; and during the whole of it his real motives were undoubtedly misunderstood by the British Government. He died unexpectedly in 1825, and his death placed his brother Nicholas on the throne of Russia. It was customary on the accession of a new monarch to send a complimentary embassy of congratulation, and Mr. Canning thought that advantage might be taken of the occasion to arrive at some real understanding with the Russian Government. He prevailed on the Duke of Wellington to accept the mission, and he instructed the Duke to arrive at an understanding on two points—the Greek insurrec-

tion and the Russian quarrel with Turkey. On the first point the Duke was to endeavour to obtain the co-operation of the Emperor in securing favourable terms for the insurgent Greeks; on the second point, on which the British Government still thought Russia in the wrong, he was to persuade the Emperor to abstain from pushing matters to a crisis. In one sense the embassy was a failure. The Duke was unable to prevent the Emperor from bringing his own immediate quarrel to a crisis by despatching an ultimatum to Constantinople. But in another sense the mission was most successful. The Duke learned enough at St. Petersburg to see that the opinion of the British Government was wrong and that Russia was in the right; and that Britain could not, consequently, in justice support Turkey in resisting the demands which Russia was pressing on her.[1]

At one time it seemed probable that the Duke would be no more able to induce Nicholas to support the Greeks than to prevail upon him to refrain from pushing his own quarrel to a crisis. Nicholas disliked—as Alexander had disliked before him—the notion of helping insurgents, and declined to make any mention of the Greeks in the ultimatum which he addressed to the Porte. His advisers, however, had the wisdom to see that, in delivering an ultimatum which might lead to war, he could not afford to disregard the assistance of the Greek insur-

[1] The Duke's view has been so unaccountably neglected that it may be right to give it in his own words:—"Some of the questions regarded the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, upon examining which I was under the necessity of admitting that the Emperor was in the right and the Porte in the wrong, contrary to the previous determination of Her Majesty's Government." *Duke of Wellington's Despatches* (Civil Series from 1815), vol. vii. p. 340.

gents. Thus advised, Nicholas agreed to join with England in proposing that Greece should be made an autonomous dependency of the Turkish Empire.

These decisions led to events of the first importance. Startled by the ultimatum which Nicholas despatched, and by the terms in which it was couched, the Porte hastily concluded the Treaty of Ackermann. This treaty secured to Wallachia and Moldavia the virtual independence which they have since enjoyed. It gave Servia a somewhat similar independence. It confirmed to Russia the right of interference in the internal affairs of Turkey which the Treaty of Kainardji had already given to it; it thus dealt anew a fatal blow at the independence of the Ottoman Empire. But the conclusion of the Treaty of Ackermann was only one of the consequences which resulted from the events connected with the Duke of Wellington's mission to St. Petersburg. Nicholas had given a reluctant promise to support the Greeks, but he had no intention of allowing his undertaking to be forgotten. In April 1826, the Russian ambassador at London was instructed to urge the British Government to carry out the agreement. His application, which ultimately led to the Battle of Navarino, divided English statesmen into two classes, who from that day to the present time have held opposite views on the Eastern question.

It was the opinion of Mr. Canning in 1826 that the time had arrived for putting pressure on the Porte, and possibly for recognising some portion of Greece as an independent State. It was his advice that the pressure should be made effectual by securing the co-operation of as many of the great powers as possible. The Tory

members of Lord Liverpool's government disliked the notion of putting pressure upon Turkey. But the Tory members of the Liverpool administration were powerless without the Duke of Wellington, and the Duke had committed them to some sort of interference at St. Petersburg. Mr. Canning was accordingly allowed to seek assistance from Vienna, from Berlin, and from Paris. His application secured the warm co-operation of France; and France, Russia, and England, accordingly resolved to make a joint application to the Porte. At this point, however, both France and Russia wished to go further. They desired, if their remonstrance received no attention, to employ force. Mr. Canning and his immediate followers were prepared to adopt this suggestion. The Duke of Wellington and the Tory members of the Cabinet were opposed to it.

In the first instance, the policy of Mr. Canning was successful. The serious illness and retirement of Lord Liverpool led to the secession of the Tory members from the Cabinet. During the short remainder of his life Mr. Canning was supreme, and he used his supremacy to enforce an armistice on Turk and Greek. Sir William Codrington, in co-operation with a French and Russian squadron, was instructed to stop hostilities, and he eventually prevented their resumption by destroying the fleet of Ibrahim Pasha at Navarino. But, though the policy of interference proved in the first instance successful, a contrary policy was soon initiated. Mr. Canning did not himself live to see the results of his own policy. The ministry of the Duke of Wellington, which after a short interval succeeded to power, ventured, notwithstanding the remonstrances of George IV., on describ-

ing the victory which had been won as "untoward." The expression at once displayed the radical differences of opinion which divided British statesmen on Eastern politics. The Whigs and Liberals, so far from regarding the victory as untoward, were congratulating themselves on the results which ensued from it; and the Duke of Wellington's government, instead of withdrawing from the triple alliance to which Mr. Canning had committed England, was forced reluctantly to carry out Mr. Canning's policy.

This result was no doubt partly due to the almost inconceivable folly of the Turks themselves. The Turkish Cabinet chose the moment when it found itself confronted with an irresistible alliance to tear up the Treaty of Ackermann which it had concluded with Russia in the previous year. Its action in this respect led to the memorable war of 1828 and 1829. In the latter of these two years the Russians, under Paskievitsch, captured Kars and Anapa in Asia Minor; the Russians, under Diebitsch, crossed the Balkans and dictated peace at Adrianople. The Treaty of Adrianople confirmed the advantages which Russia had previously extorted from the Ottoman; it advanced the Russian frontier in Asia, and it indirectly secured the independence of Greece. The British Foreign Office had previously minimised the claims of Greece, because any concession which it made to the Greeks reduced the strength of Turkey. After Adrianople, Lord Aberdeen, the Foreign Minister, adopted a contrary policy: Turkey was apparently in its death-struggle; and Greece therefore, so he thought, should be strengthened, and made the eventual heir of the Turk.

Up to the fall of the Tory Ministry in 1830 the Eastern Question continued to occupy the same position. One section of English statesmen distrusted Russia, and regretted the collapse of its hereditary opponent the Turk. Another section, without much love for the Russians, congratulated themselves on the events which had secured Greece her independence. The chief danger of serious misunderstanding between Russia and England was apparently removed by the appointment of Lord Palmerston as Lord Aberdeen's successor. Lord Palmerston had hitherto consistently supported the claims of Greece, and resisted the pretensions of Turkey. Yet by one of those strange alterations of opinion which occasionally occur in public men, Lord Palmerston was destined to modify his previous conclusions, and to become the fierce opponent of Russian progress, and the consistent believer in the possible regeneration of Turkey. Various circumstances contributed to effect this change in his views. Russia, in the first place, was the chief obstacle which retarded the success of his Belgian policy. Russia, in the next place, was opposed to the system which he pursued in Spain. Russia, in the third place, disregarding the remonstrances of the British Ministry, stamped out rebellion in Poland with a cruelty which excited universal indignation in Britain. Two Englishmen, Lord Dudley Stuart and Mr. Urquhart, busied themselves to excite their fellow countrymen against Russia. Lord Dudley Stuart was the champion of the Poles in the House of Commons. Mr. Urquhart was a fertile author. These two men succeeded in creating an enthusiasm at home for Pole and Turk; and Lord Palmerston, who loved to display the power of his country,

became more and more disposed to adopt an anti-Russian policy. Mr. Urquhart, sent in an official capacity to Constantinople, almost succeeded in creating war between Russia and England. His indefatigable pen never tired of stating and restating the reasons why war was necessary.

It so happened that a new event of undoubted importance emphasised Mr. Urquhart's arguments and strengthened Lord Palmerston's convictions. Mehemet Ali, Pasha of Egypt, availing himself of a quarrel with Abdallah Bey Pasha of Acre, sent an army under Ibrahim Pasha into the Levant. Ibrahim reduced Acre in 1832, crossed the Taurus, entered Asia Minor, and defeated a Turkish army which endeavoured to withstand his progress. Mahmoud II., Sultan of Turkey, dreading the immediate dissolution of his empire, turned for aid to England, to France, and to Russia. Russia alone was both able and willing to give him assistance; Nicholas moved an army on the Bosphorus, and the throne of the Turk was saved, but the Turk obtained his safety by signing the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi. The public articles of the treaty merely concluded an offensive and defensive alliance between Russia and Turkey. In a secret article the Porte agreed, when required by Russia to do so, to exclude all foreign vessels of war from the Dardanelles. The secret article obviously secured the predominance of Russia in the East; it consequently excited panic and indignation in this country. It is hardly too much to say that Lord Palmerston during the next six years never lost sight of the object which he set himself—to get rid of the secret article of the treaty. An opportunity for doing

so was again found in the ambitious projects of Mehemet Ali. It was no secret that Mehemet was continually strengthening his forces, and preparing for a new contest with the Turk. War again broke out in 1839; the Turkish armies were totally defeated; the Turkish fleet, betrayed by its commander, sailed into Alexandria, and the Turkish Sultan died, or—as rumour said—was murdered. Nothing but the interposition of the rest of Europe could have prevented the complete subjugation of Turkey. The two principal powers of Western Europe were however animated by different views on the Eastern question. Both of them professed a desire to maintain the Ottoman Empire in its integrity. But while Lord Palmerston, on behalf of England, thought that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire required the withdrawal of Mehemet into Egypt, the French Government was in favour of adding Syria to Mehemet's Pachalic. Nicholas, aware of the difference which had arisen between the two Western powers, offered to co-operate with England without the aid of France; and to abandon, in return, the advantages which she had secured by the secret article of the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi. Lord Palmerston readily assented to the Russian proposal. The Austrian and Prussian Governments agreed to the new programme; and a quadruple alliance was accordingly formed, in which France had no share, under which the contracting powers agreed to enforce their own views on Mehemet and Ibrahim.

This treaty seemed at one moment likely to lead to war between France and England; but it undoubtedly fulfilled Lord Palmerston's immediate objects. Mehemet and Ibrahim were driven within Egypt; the authority

of the Sultan was nominally restored in the Levant; the former rule, respecting the closing of the Dardanelles when the Porte was at peace, was again adopted; and for another twelve years the Eastern question did not trouble the peace of the world. In the interim, the conciliatory disposition of Lord Aberdeen and M. Guizot, the fall of Louis Philippe, and the necessities of his successors, all tended to produce a good understanding between France and England; and, when troubles again occurred in the East, the two Western powers of the Continent were accordingly allied. The immediate cause of the war which broke out in 1853 was a dispute which had arisen between France and Russia upon the custody of the Holy Places in Jerusalem. The real cause was the intention of Russia to hasten the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire. Nicholas, in a memorable conversation, actually suggested to the British ambassador at St. Petersburg that England should receive Egypt and Crete as her own portion of the spoil. This conversation, which took place in January 1853, was at once reported to the British Government. It undoubtedly prepared the way for future trouble. Nicholas probably imagined that it was only an act of common prudence to make some provisions for administering the estate of the dying man at Constantinople. The British ministers, on the contrary, regarded the proposal with horror. Nicholas's scheme, consequently, came to nothing. But it had the effect of rendering the British Ministry suspicious of his intentions, at a moment when a good understanding with this country was of the first importance to the Czar of Russia.

There can, then, be very little doubt that Nicholas

committed a grave error in suggesting a partition, which may have seemed reasonable enough to Continental statesmen, but which was regarded with horror by England. Almost at the same moment he affronted France by declining to call Napoleon "Monsieur mon frère." The folly of a monarch who founds a quarrel on a mere dislike of a phrase requires no commentary. Nicholas had the singular indiscretion to render a British ministry suspicious of him, and a French emperor angry with him, in the same month. Napoleon could easily avenge the affront. It is a striking remark of a great writer that "different religions have not been quite so barbarous to one another as sects of the same religion;" and this remark received a fresh illustration in the year 1853. The Greek and Latin Churches both claimed the right of protecting the Holy Places of Palestine. Both appealed to a Mahometan arrangement in support of their claim: each declined to admit the pretensions of the other. The Latin Church in Palestine was under the protection of France; the Greek Church was under the protection of Russia; and France and Russia had constantly supported one against the other these rival claims. In the beginning of 1853 France renewed the controversy. She even threatened to settle the question by force. The man whom Nicholas would not call "mon frère" was stirring a controversy thick with trouble for the Czar of Russia.

It happened, moreover, that the controversy was one which, from its very nature, was certain to spread. Nearly eighty years before, by the Treaty of Kainardji, the Porte had undertaken to afford a constant protection to its Christian subjects, and to place a new Greek

Church at Constantinople, which it undertook to erect, "and the ministers who officiated at it under the specific protection of the Russian Empire." The exact meaning of this famous article had always been disputed. In Western Europe it had been usually held that it applied only to the new Greek Church at Constantinople, and the ministers who officiated at it. But Russian statesmen had always contended that its meaning was much wider; and British statesmen of repute had supported the contention. The general undertaking which the Porte had given to Russia to afford a constant protection to its Christian subjects gave Russia—so they argued—the right to interfere when such protection was not afforded.

In such a country as Turkey, where chronic misgovernment prevailed, opportunity was never wanting for complaining that the Christians were inadequately protected. The dispute about the Holy Places was soon superseded by a general demand of Russia for the adequate protection of the Christian subjects of the Porte. In the summer of 1853 the demand took the shape of an ultimatum; and, when the Turkish ministers declined to comply with the Russian demand, a Russian army crossed the Pruth and occupied the Principalities.

In six months a miserable quarrel about the custody of the Holy Places had assumed dimensions which were clearly threatening war. At the advice of England the Porte abstained from treating the occupation of the Principalities as an act of war; and diplomacy consequently secured an interval for arranging peace. The Austrian Government framed a note, which is known as the Vienna Note, as a basis of a settlement. England and the neutral powers assented to the note; Russia

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accepted it; and it was then presented to the Porte. But Turkey, with the obstinacy which has always characterised its statesmen, declined to accept it. War might even then have been prevented if the British Government had boldly insisted on its acceptance, and had told Turkey that if she modified the conditions she need not count on England's assistance. One of the leading members of Lord Aberdeen's Ministry wished to do this, and declared to the last hour of his life that this course should have been taken. But the course was not taken. Turkey was permitted, or, according to Baron Stockmar, encouraged to modify the Vienna Note; the modifications were rejected by Russia; and the Porte, on the 26th of September, delivered an ultimatum, and on the 4th of October 1853 declared war.

These events excited a very widespread indignation in this country. The people, indeed, were only imperfectly acquainted with the causes which had produced the quarrel; many of them were unaware that the complication had been originally introduced by the act of France; others of them failed to reflect that the refusal of the Porte to accept a note which the four Great Powers—of which England was one—had agreed upon was the immediate cause of hostilities. Those who were better informed thought that the note was a mistake, and that the Turk had exercised a wise discretion in rejecting it; while the whole nation instinctively felt that Russia, throughout the negotiations, had acted with unnecessary harshness. In October 1853, therefore, the country was almost unanimously in favour of supporting the Turk. The events of the next few weeks turned this feeling into enthusiasm. The Turkish army, under

Omar Pasha, proved its mettle by winning one or two victories over the Russian troops. The Turkish fleet at Sinope was suddenly attacked and destroyed. Its destruction was, undoubtedly, an act of war: it was distorted into an act of treachery; a rupture between England and Russia became thenceforward inevitable; and in March 1854 England and France declared war.

With the circumstances of that war this little book has no concern. But, after the war had lasted a few months, Nicholas died; and an effort was made to procure peace. A conference was held at Vienna in the spring of 1855, at which Lord John Russell represented this country. The negotiations turned upon four points —1st, the position of the Principalities; 2d, the navigation of the Danube; 3d, the independence of the Porte; and 4th, the neutrality of the Black Sea. They were broken off from the refusal of Russia to accept the last of these conditions. Austria, anxious to make one more effort to secure peace, proposed that Russia should limit her forces in this sea to their strength in 1853; and that Austria should herself undertake to make any additions beyond this strength a *casus belli*. Both Lord John Russell and M. Drouyn de Lhuys, the French Plenipotentiary, agreed to recommend this proposal to the consideration of their Governments. But the French and English Governments both thought the terms inadmissible; and the war accordingly went on.

The events of 1855-6 proved, however, very different from those of 1854-5. The allied armies acquired increased strength from the more efficient administration which disaster had necessitated; the Russian armies, on

the contrary, showed increasing signs of exhaustion. "The master of the sea," wrote Gibbon, "will always acquire the dominion of the land;" and the Crimean War was destined to illustrate this great truth. The allies, moving by sea, easily supplied their troops; the Russians, moving by land, were exhausted with the process of feeding and recruiting them; and Sebastopol became a great wen which drew away the life-blood of the Russian Empire. At last, through the good offices of Austria, Russia agreed to accept the preliminaries of peace, and to meet the European Powers in Congress in Paris. This Congress led, on the 30th of March 1856, to the signature of the Peace of Paris. By that peace the independence of Turkey was secured; the frontier of Russia in Bessarabia was set back; Moldavia and Wallachia were continued as separate provinces, tributary to the Porte; and, under the guarantee of the Great Powers, the navigation of the Danube was thrown open; the Black Sea was neutralised; and, with insignificant exceptions, no war vessel was to be allowed on it. The Porte, on its part, issued a firman promising to improve the condition of its subjects; and England, France, and Austria subsequently agreed on a treaty guaranteeing the independence and integrity of Turkish territory.

Such were the chief consequences of the Crimean War. Before four years were over, one of the chief stipulations of the treaty was set aside. Wallachia and Moldavia, which it had been the policy of the Powers to separate, displayed a constant desire to join. Two of the great Continental Powers — France and Russia — favoured the junction. England, Austria, and Turkey, thinking that the union would ultimately lead to their

independence, opposed their fusion under one prince. At last, after discussions, which at one moment seemed likely to rekindle the flames of war, an administrative union was arranged, which resulted, in due course, in the formal union of the two provinces in 1861.

Thus, five years after the Peace of Paris, one of the stipulations on which England had insisted was surrendered. In 1870 the Franco-German War led to the obliteration of another of them. In November, when the armies of France were either beaten or besieged, Russia repudiated the clause of the Treaty of Paris which had limited the forces of Russia and Turkey in the Black Sea. The declaration of the Russian Government came as a painful shock to the British people. The determination of a great European state to tear up the clause of a treaty excited indignation. It was recollected, moreover, that it was for the sake of this clause that the Crimean War had been prolonged after the Vienna negotiations; and that all the blood which had been shed, and all the money which had been spent, after the spring of 1855, were wasted in its abandonment. Yet these reflections could not remove the fact that Russia had seized an opportunity for repudiating the stipulation; and that, unless England were prepared for war, nothing could prevent her rejecting it. All that diplomacy was able to do was to lessen the shock by persuading the Russian Government to submit its proposal for the abrogation of the clause to a conference. Nothing, perhaps, could have better served the purposes of Russia. The conference met "without any foregone conclusion as to its results." It had practically nothing to do but to record its assent to the Russian proposal;

and the clause, therefore, for which an English army had fought and bled from the spring of 1855 to the spring of 1856 was quietly abandoned.[1]

For five years more the Eastern Question remained undisturbed. In the spring of 1875 an insurrection broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina, two of the northern provinces of European Turkey. The Porte failed to quench the disturbance; and, its efforts to do so increasing its pecuniary embarrassments, was forced in the autumn to repudiate the claims of its many creditors. Nothing could have been more unfortunate for its prospects. France and England alone had lent the Ottoman many tens of millions of money, and thousands of French and English men were seriously inconvenienced by the bankruptcy of the Porte. In the meanwhile, the insurrection continued to spread, and attracted the attention of the great European Powers. At the instigation of Austria a note was drawn up, which was at once signed by all the European Powers except England, and which was ultimately accepted by England also, declaring that "the promises of reform made by the Porte had not been carried into effect, and that some combined action by the Powers of Europe was necessary to insist on the fulfilment of the many engagements which Turkey had made and broken." As the note failed to effect its object, the representatives of the Northern Powers—Germany, Austria, and Russia—met at Berlin, proposed a suspension of arms for two months, and intimated that if Turkey in the two months failed

[1] It ought perhaps to be added that, in compensation, the Porte was authorised to summon the fleets of its allies to its assistance when in danger, and to admit them to the Black Sea.

to fulfil her broken promises, "force would be used to compel her" to do so. The British Government, unwilling to join in a threat, refused to sign this new note. The insurrection went on; Servia, sympathising with the insurgents, declared war against Turkey; Russian officers and Russian troops fought in the Servian battalions; and Russia herself, setting her legions in motion, evidently prepared for hostilities.

When these events occurred, large numbers of the English people were prepared to support the Turk. Though they had been partially estranged from the cause of Turkey by the repudiation of the Ottoman debt in the previous autumn, they recollected the sacrifices of the Crimean War; they were irritated with the manner in which one part of the Treaty of Paris had been torn up in 1870; and they were consequently prepared to resist any further movement on the part of Russia. The Porte, however, dreading the extension of revolt, allowed its officers to anticipate disorder by massacre. The atrocious cruelty with which this policy was executed excited a general outburst of indignation in this country; and the British Ministry, whose leader had hitherto displayed much sympathy with the Turks, found itself forced to observe a strict neutrality.

In the short war which ensued in the autumn of 1876, the Servian troops proved no match for the Turkish battalions. At the request or command of Russia the Porte was forced to grant an armistice to the belligerents; and, on the suggestion of the British Ministry, a conference of the Great Powers was held at Constantinople to provide for the better government of the Turkish provinces.

The Constantinople Conference, held at the beginning of 1877, formed in many respects an exact parallel to the Vienna Conference held in the summer of 1855. In 1855 the Neutral Powers of Europe agreed in a joint note, which was accepted by Russia, and rejected by the Porte. At Constantinople, in 1877, the Porte rejected all the proposals on which the other Powers were agreed. In both cases, therefore, it was the action of the Porte which made the Conferences abortive. In each case the failure of the Conference was followed by war. But the parallel ends at this point. The war which Turkey commenced against Russia in 1853 found France and England in the field in 1854. In the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-8, Turkey was left to fight her own battle alone.

Throughout 1877 the attitude of England remained unchanged. The Porte had effectually lost its goodwill, and the English people stood aside and refused to take part in the terrible drama. But, in the beginning of 1878, this feeling was modified. The people had, by that time, partially forgotten the terrible atrocities which had shocked a continent in 1876; they were alarmed at the prostration of the Porte, at the rapid progress of the Russian arms, and at the evident danger of a Russian occupation of Constantinople. At the beginning of 1878 Parliament was summoned, and asked to vote £6,000,000 for military expenses. In February the British fleet was ordered to enter the Dardanelles. In March peace was signed at San Stefano by Russia and Turkey.

The conclusion of peace led to a new step in the policy of the British Government. It insisted that

Russia and Turkey alone were not competent to make peace. The conditions on which the Turkish Empire existed had been settled by Europe at Paris. What Europe could lay down, it was argued, Europe alone could alter. To enforce this proposition two fresh steps were taken. The reserves were called out, and a detachment of Indian troops was ordered to Malta. These decisions were followed by a modification in the Ministry itself. It was understood throughout 1877 that the Beaconsfield administration comprised at least two members who were in favour of peace: one of these, Lord Carnarvon, resigned, on the vote of £6,000,000, in January; the other of them, Lord Derby, resigned on the despatch of the Indian troops to Malta in March.

The policy of the Beaconsfield administration prevailed; and Russia at last consented that the whole of the provisions of the treaty should be laid before a conference of the Great Powers. The stipulations of San Stefano were accordingly modified at Berlin. Many of the arrangements, indeed, on which Russia had insisted at San Stefano, were confirmed at Berlin. That portion of Bessarabia which Russia had been forced to yield after the Crimean War was ceded to her. The Russian frontier was advanced in Asia; and Kars, Ardahan, and Batoum were surrendered by the Porte. Roumania, Servia, and Montenegro were declared independent; and the frontiers of Montenegro were extended to the sea.

In these respects, the Treaty of Berlin only confirmed the stipulations which had been made at San Stefano. In three other respects it made some alterations in the condition of Eastern Europe. In the first place, the Con-

gress expressed a strong desire—which was thought to be equivalent to a command—that the frontiers of Greece should be extended northwards. In the next place, it authorised Austria to occupy the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose disorders had been the original cause of the war; and in the third place, while at San Stefano the centre of European Turkey had been formed into a vast autonomous province known as Bulgaria, the limits of this province were reduced at Berlin, and the portion of Bulgaria south of the Balkans was formed into a separate province known as Eastern Roumelia. It is perhaps noteworthy that the proposal for forming Bulgaria into two provinces was in distinct accordance with the traditional foreign policy of England in Eastern Europe. In 1829 Lord Aberdeen, as Foreign Minister, seriously contemplated the separation of Greece into two states. In 1856 the government of Lord Palmerston successfully insisted on the separation of Roumania into two states. The separation of Eastern Roumelia from Bulgaria was the one great achievement which was accomplished at Berlin. Yet Greece was formed into one state. Moldavia and Wallachia were four years after the Congress of Paris united under one ruler; and Eastern Roumelia, by a similar fate, may be drawn into Bulgaria. The tendency of men of the same race and language to draw together is the strongest factor in European politics, and the statesmen who ignore it are likely to witness the discomfiture of their policy.

Such were the arrangements made at Berlin. One reflection will obviously be made upon them. The cession to Russia of its old frontier in Bessarabia removed the last trace of the Crimean War; and, for good or for evil,

Russia in 1878 resumed in Europe the exact position which she had occupied before 1854. She found her territory in Asia advanced for the first time in her history into the watershed of the Euphrates. Her advance probably suggested to the British Government a new policy. On the very day after it consented to enter the Berlin Congress it concluded a secret treaty with the Porte, guaranteeing the inviolability of its Asiatic territories on condition that the necessary reforms were introduced into the administration. It, at the same time, obtained from the Porte the right of occupying the island of Cyprus as a place of arms. As Turkey did not undertake any reforms in Asia, the guarantee has probably already become a dead letter, nearly in the same way as the similar guarantee in the tripartite Treaty of Paris. The general question how far a prospective guarantee can ever be operative will be properly considered in the succeeding chapter. Here it is sufficient to point out that the guarantee and the occupation of Cyprus conjointly proved that the British Government imagined that Russia was aiming, not at the Bosphorus, but at the Gulf of Scanderoon.

It was the object of the previous chapter to trace the progress of British foreign policy in Western Europe. It has been the chief object of the present chapter to trace the development of the foreign policy of England in Eastern Europe. It will probably be evident to any one who carefully considers the foreign policy of England for the last two hundred years, that the main object of British diplomacy in the eighteenth century was to maintain the balance of power in Western Europe, and that the main object of British diplomacy in the

nineteenth century has been to maintain the balance of power in Eastern Europe. Any fair critic will probably add that British statesmen of the eighteenth century, when they talked of the balance of power, meant that the scale should decline against France. Just in the same way those who talk about the balance of power in the nineteenth century usually mean that the balance should decline against Russia.

It will, perhaps, be equally evident to any one who reviews the facts which are related in the present chapter that the two great parties in the British Senate have usually approached the Eastern question from opposite standpoints. One party, of whom the first exponent was Mr. Pitt, and which has since been represented by Lord Palmerston and Lord Beaconsfield, has proposed to check the advance of Russia by rendering active assistance to the Turk. Another party, whose founder was Burke, and which has since had its most prominent spokesmen in Mr. Canning and Mr. Gladstone, has objected to render assistance to the Turk, and has endeavoured to co-operate with Russia in securing the improvement of the Turkish dominions. The former of those two parties has aimed at the preservation of the Turkish Empire; the latter of them has acquiesced in the gradual division of its territories among the people who inhabit them. This is not the place to express any positive opinion on the rival merits of the two systems; events alone can show which of the two will ultimately prevail.

CHAPTER IV.

AMBASSADORS: THEIR DUTIES AND PRIVILEGES.

It is one thing to be acquainted with the principles on which the foreign policy of a country is based; it is another to understand the machinery by which it is carried out. An attempt has been made in the preceding chapters to trace the gradual development of British foreign policy from the earliest times to the present day. The concluding chapters of this work must be devoted to an explanation of the machinery which diplomacy employs. Such an explanation necessarily raises constitutional and technical questions of high importance. The prerogative of the Crown, the functions of Parliament, and the position and privileges of diplomatists, are all matters which demand consideration in connection with it.

In this country the conduct of foreign policy is vested in the Crown. It is the prerogative of the Crown to declare war or to conclude peace. It follows that all the negotiations which may result either in war or in peace are concluded under the immediate orders of the Crown. The Crown, indeed, can only act on the advice of its constitutional ministers, who are responsible for the course which it adopts on each occasion. But in one memorable instance in our history even this safeguard was wanting. William III. was his own Foreign Minister,

and the two partition treaties were negotiated under his orders, without the cognisance of his advisers. Lord Macaulay has declared that there was nothing more unconstitutional in a sovereign conducting the foreign policy of his Government than in the same sovereign commanding his army at the Boyne. But most authorities would arrive at a different conclusion. The commander of an army in the field is an executive officer, who carries out the orders which he receives from the Government. But the Foreign Minister is a deliberative officer, who decides on the policy which commanders-in-chief and other officials shall execute. It may be inconvenient for a sovereign to be entrusted with the execution of a nation's policy; it must be much more inconvenient for a sovereign to arrogate to himself the right of determining what that policy should be.

Even William III. could not have acted in the manner which he did if his conduct had not been tacitly endorsed by his advisers. The Chancellor, Lord Somers, placed the Great Seal to blank powers, under which the Partition Treaty was negotiated; he sealed its ratification, "though not consulted upon it, and though he seems to have had some objections to the terms; and in both instances he set up the king's commands as a sufficient defence. The exclusion," wrote Mr. Hallam, from whom this extract is taken, "of all those whom, whether called privy or cabinet councillors, the nation holds responsible for its safety, from this great negotiation, tended to throw back the whole executive government into the single will of the sovereign, and ought to have exasperated the House of Commons far more than the actual treaties of partition." The House of Commons made the great mistake

of attacking the policy, not the conduct, of the negotiation. The abortive impeachment of Somers and his colleagues, however, was not without effect; and no sovereign has since undertaken, no minister would have permitted a sovereign to undertake, the functions which were assumed by William III.

The example of William III., however, has had its influence on all his successors. Almost every sovereign who has since reigned has interfered more or less directly in the management of foreign affairs; and the publication of the Prince Consort's memoirs has afforded abundant proof of the influence which the Crown still exercises in this direction.[1]

The despatches received from abroad are regularly submitted to the Queen; the despatches addressed to British ministers abroad are occasionally altered by the Queen; and the Queen undoubtedly exercises, in this way, a control over foreign policy different from that which she exercises in domestic matters. For this influence, however, the minister, and not the sovereign, is responsible to Parliament; and the sovereign's control, therefore, is or may be limited by the advice or decision of the Cabinet.

If, however, the Crown exercises an exceptional influence in foreign policy, the Foreign Minister in his turn

[1] The best proof of the interest which the Queen takes in foreign affairs, is the memorandum which she addressed to Lord Palmerston in 1850. In this memorandum "she requires—1. That he will distinctly state what he proposes in a given case, in order that the Queen may know as distinctly to what she has given her royal sanction; 2. Having once given her sanction to a measure, that it be not arbitrarily altered or modified by the minister."—Sir T. Martin's *Life of Prince Consort*, vol. ii. p. 305.

is more free from Parliamentary control than his other colleagues. The Legislature, indeed, has an indirect control over the executive. It can refuse supplies for carrying on a war which it does not approve. It can turn out the minister who concludes a treaty which it considers inexpedient. But this power is not always susceptible of easy application. It is one thing to disapprove a war; it is another to refuse the supplies which a declaration of war necessitates. It is one thing to think a treaty inexpedient; it is another to court the confusion which may arise from censuring the ministry which has concluded it. For these reasons, the control which Parliament, or which the public through Parliament, exercises over foreign policy is neither so direct nor so powerful as the control which it exercises over domestic policy. A Foreign Minister who does not commit any very great offence, or venture on any very startling innovation, is tolerably secure of Parliamentary support.

This result is concurrently promoted by two circumstances. In nine cases out of ten Parliament is unable to control the Foreign Minister, because it has only an imperfect acquaintance with the facts which are before the Foreign Office. A delicate correspondence with foreign powers cannot be easily published until it is complete, or until the Governments who are parties to it assent to its production. Parliament is therefore only acquainted with its nature when the events which it has prepared are already accomplished. If Parliament presses for information with a view to influencing the policy of the ministry, it is told that the correspondence cannot be produced without inconvenience. If it attempts to

debate the matter without the papers before it, it is told to wait for their publication. It is compelled, in consequence, to trust to the Foreign Minister, and to acknowledge its own inability to interfere.[1]

This fact has led to a singular circumstance. In modern England Parliamentary control means the control of the House of Commons. As a general rule, the effective offices in the State are, in consequence, held by members of the House of Commons; and the peers whose ability or influence gains them a seat in the Cabinet are placed usually in the ornamental offices over which the

[1] When Lord Palmerston offered Mr. Cobden a seat in the Cabinet, he said to him, "You and your friends complain of a secret diplomacy, and that wars are entered into without consulting the people. Now, it is in the Cabinet alone that questions of foreign policy are settled. We never consult Parliament till *after* they are settled. If, therefore, you wish to have a voice in these questions, you can only do so in the Cabinet."—(See Mr. Morley's *Life of Cobden*, vol. ii. p. 231.) Mr. Disraeli said much the same thing in 1864—"To initiate a foreign policy is the prerogative of the Crown, exercised under the responsibility of constitutional ministers. It is devised, initiated, and carried out in secrecy. . . . It is for Parliament to inquire, to criticise, to support, or to condemn, in questions of foreign policy; but it is not for Parliament to initiate a foreign policy."—(*Lord Beaconsfield's Collected Speeches*, ii. 125.) The wisest foreign ministers have, however, shown an increasing desire to act in accordance with what they understood to be the views of Parliament. Lord Derby, speaking as Lord Stanley and Foreign Minister in 1867, in reply to a complaint that the House had only the power of discussing a treaty, when the country was pledged to the obligations thereby incurred, used these words—"All I can say is, that is the constitution under which we live: the power of making treaties is vested in the executive upon their own responsibility. If I may judge from my own feelings, so far from trying to strain that responsibility, a minister will always desire to be supported by the knowledge that the opinion of the House is in his favour."—(Hansard, clxxxvii. 916.)

House of Commons is less anxious to exercise a direct control. But this is not true of the Foreign Office. In ordinary cases the Foreign Secretary is a peer; and, while there has been an increasing tendency to appoint commoners to the other efficient offices, there has been a growing tendency to appoint peers to the Foreign Office. During the present century, for instance, twenty-six different persons have held the office of Home Secretary, and twenty persons the position of Foreign Minister. Seven out of the twenty-six Home Secretaries have been peers of Parliament, and all the seven held office before the formation of Sir Robert Peel's ministry in 1841. During the same eighty-one years eight members of the House of Commons have held the office of Foreign Secretary; but six out of the eight held office before 1841.[1] From 1841 downwards the office of Home Secretary has been held exclusively by members of the House of Commons; the office of Foreign Minister has been held almost exclusively by peers.

The Foreign Office, in its modern shape, was originally constituted in 1782. Before that time the business of the country was usually divided between two Secretaries of State for the Northern and Southern Departments. The Northern Department conducted the correspondence with the Northern States, the Southern with the Southern States, of Europe. This inconvenient division was terminated in 1782; and, from that time, the whole control of foreign affairs has been vested in one minister.

In conducting the foreign policy of the nation, the

[1] One of the eight—Lord Palmerston—held office both before and after 1841.

Foreign Minister is necessarily dependent on the information which is furnished by the agents of the Government resident abroad. These agents are divided into two services—the diplomatic service and the consular service. In theory, the members of the diplomatic service represent the Governments by whom they are appointed on questions of foreign policy; the members of the consular service represent the commercial interests of their employers. In practice, however, the functions of the two services are not always kept distinct. In many parts of the world England has consular agents where it has no diplomatic envoys; and in these cases the consuls are necessarily instructed to inform themselves upon questions of foreign policy, which are usually left to the control of the diplomatic service.

The diplomatic service has only gradually attained its present importance. But the reputation which diplomatists have acquired is perhaps rather due to the mystery in which diplomacy is veiled, than to the ability displayed by those who have made the service a study. In this country, at any rate, it is difficult to name many diplomatists who rose to first-rate eminence between the retirement of Sir William Temple and the rise of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. Yet diplomacy is spoken of with awe, as a subject which none but able men, trained in the profession, can possibly understand. The word itself, moreover, is long and sonorous; and many persons have perhaps no notion that diplomacy owes its name to the diploma, or folded piece of parchment, on which the appointment of the diplomatist was originally made.

Diplomacy, however, and diplomatists are words which have only lately been introduced into the English lan-

guage. They have no place in Johnson's Dictionary.[1] When ambassadors were first sent to reside in foreign courts in the fifteenth century, they were called "orators." The word, which was employed in the same sense in the old world both by Cicero and Livy, was used correctly enough in this way by George Eliot in *Romola;*[2] it may be found in the State Papers in the State Paper Office; and the ambassadors, whom Henry VIII. sent to Rome to negotiate the basis of a separation between the king and his first wife, are expressly called, and still live in Mr. Froude's pages as, "the king's said orators."

The old name by which ambassadors were originally known could not have been applied to them without reason. It is obvious that the notion of those who first used it was that the ambassador should make an oration for the king, his master; that he should be, in short, the king's advocate; and this idea is a survival of some of the earliest notices of ambassadors in literature. Before the Trojan War, Menelaus and Ulysses were sent on an embassy to Troy to demand the release of Helen. Their business was not to negotiate but to speak; and Antenor, who describes their discharge of it in the *Iliad*, distinguishes between the oratory of the two men. Every Englishman must be familiar with the parallel which the

[1] The word "diplomatic," however, was applied to an ambassador before the close of the 18th century. Tom Paine says of Franklin, "He was not the diplomatic of a court, but of man."—*Rights of Man*, Part I. p. 42. A much higher authority, Burke, writing about the same time, applies the term diplomacy to the persons who would now be called diplomatists.

[2] It may be noted that George Eliot ascribes the word to the habits of the age, "Ambassadors—orators, as they were called in those haranguing times." She seems, therefore, to be right in her name, and wrong in her reason for it.

Bible affords to this description. When Sennacherib sent Rabshakeh on a mission to Hezekiah, the ambassador, for such he was, addressed the king in the presence of the Jews: "Then said Eliakim and Shebna and Joah unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it: and speak not to us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall. But Rabshakeh said, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men that sit upon the wall?" And he proceeded, accordingly, to make a speech to the people on the wall, which the ministers—if they at all resembled modern ministers—must have listened to with great anxiety. Here, then, both in Homer and in the Bible, we find two instances of ambassadors acting, not as negotiators, but as advocates, and addressing, not the rulers to whom they were ostensibly sent, but the people themselves. Since 1825, when the Bible Society ceased printing the Apocrypha, Englishmen have been less familiar than their fathers were with the many beautiful books which the Apocrypha includes. But, in the Maccabees, the ambassadors—Eupolemus and Jason—whom Judas Maccabeus sent to Rome, followed the same course which Rabshakeh pursued. They entered the senate, and made a speech. Ambassadors, who were advocates, and who occasionally addressed the people against their rulers, naturally carried their lives in their hands. Antimachus —so it appears from an expression in the eleventh book of the *Iliad*—advised the Trojans to kill Ulysses and Menelaus.

It may be thought that the ancient practice hardly

accounts for the name orator being applied to the ambassador of the fifteenth century. But the fact is that the practice of the speech survived till comparatively recent times. "The solemn entry and the public audience, as they were termed"—the quotation is from Mr. Henry Reeve's article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*,—"were an essential part of the mission. At Venice, the Doge placed Sir Harry Vane, covered and seated, on his right hand in the Council of Ten. A speech was then delivered, in which the ambassador declared the friendly sentiments of his own sovereign, and his own humble desire to give effect to them."

The word orator as a designation for an ambassador, however, soon fell into disuse. It was applicable enough to an agent sent on a special mission, who was expected, like Sir Harry Vane, to commence his proceedings with a speech. But it was wholly inapplicable to an envoy who was required to reside for a protracted period at a foreign court. The envoy remained long after his speech was forgotten, and the orator became an ambassador.

The practice of maintaining resident ambassadors in foreign courts was first introduced in the fifteenth century.[1] Louis XI. had made himself acquainted with the proceedings of other nations by employing secret agents. Ferdinand of Aragon converted the spy into the ambassador, the dishonourable office into an honourable position. This circumstance possibly accounts for the derivation which has frequently been assigned to the word

[1] Special missions for temporary objects were, of course, much earlier. Those who have read Professor Ward's monograph on Chaucer will recollect that the father of English poetry was frequently employed on such missions.

ambassador. It has been traced to the Spanish verb "embiar," to send, and has been, therefore, thought to be synonymous with the French word *envoy*—a person *envoyé* or sent. But it seems certain that the word had a much older source, and that it had either a Celtic or Teutonic origin. It does not seem to have been in common use in England before the fifteenth or sixteenth century. In Wycliffe's Bible, for instance, the words message or messenger are used in most of the instances in which the word ambassador is employed in the modern version, though the Latin word "legate," and the Greek word "angel," are also occasionally employed.

In common speech all diplomatic envoys are spoken of as ambassadors. But, in the strict sense of the word, an ambassador is only an envoy of the highest of the three classes into which the diplomatic service is divided. The first of these classes comprises ambassadors, the nuncios of the Pope, and the inter-nuncio, whom the Emperor of Austria sends to Constantinople. The second comprises envoys extraordinary, or ministers plenipotentiary, accredited to sovereigns; the third class consists of *chargés d'affaires*, not so accredited.

There is not much difference between the powers of a minister plenipotentiary and those of an ambassador. The word plenipotentiary, indeed, implies that the envoy to whom it is given has full powers; but the minister plenipotentiary only enjoys on special occasions the right of personal access to the sovereign, which it is the especial privilege of an ambassador to exercise at any time. In addition to this circumstance, there is the broadest distinction between the powers of the two men. The ambassador enjoys, the minister plenipoten-

tiary does not enjoy, representative rank. In society the ambassador ranks immediately after the royal family, while the rank of the minister plenipotentiary is uncertain. The ministers plenipotentiary at our own court, by a curious arrangement, follow the dukes and precede the marquises. A *chargé d'affaires* has no right of access to the sovereign, he is only accredited to the Government, and occupies in consequence an inferior position.

It is difficult to determine the exact principle on which an ambassador is sent to one court, and a minister plenipotentiary or a *chargé d'affaires* to another. Macaulay declares in a famous chapter that in 1685 the only diplomatic envoy with the rank of ambassador was stationed at Constantinople, and partly paid by a private company. 170 years ago ambassadors of the very highest status were sent to France, Spain, and the Emperor; ambassadors of the same rank, though lower pay, to Portugal, Holland, and Sweden. The three former, according to Lord Stanhope, received £100 a week, and £1500 for equipage; the three latter £10 a day, and £1000 for equipage.[1] At the commencement of the reign of George II., this country was represented by ambassadors at Paris, Madrid, Vienna, and Constantinople; and by envoys at Lisbon, Turin, Stockholm, the Hague, and Hamburg. She had ministers resident at Dresden,

[1] According to Lord Stanhope, these salaries had remained unchanged since 1669 ; Lord Stanhope's figures, however, do not agree with those which are published for 1699 in the Return of Public Income and Expenditure, *Parl. Papers*, 1869, pt. ii. p. 587. In this return the ambassador's salary in stated at £5200 per annum, but the envoy's at only £1825, or exactly half the sum named by Lord Stanhope. I have no means of knowing whether the return or Lord Stanhope is correct, as the latter has given a wrong reference to Bolingbroke as authority for his statement.

Florence, and at other places. It is easy to see how the rise of Germany and Russia and the decay of Spain have necessitated a corresponding alteration in the position of the envoys accredited to the Russian, German, and Spanish Courts. This country, at the present time, has ambassadors at Paris, Vienna, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Rome, and Constantinople. At other courts, the Queen is represented either by ministers plenipotentiary or *chargés d'affaires.*

The ambassador owes his appointment to the sovereign, from whom he receives letters of credence. These letters, in the case of ambassadors and envoys, are signed by the sovereign whom the ambassador is appointed to represent, and addressed to the sovereign to whom he is accredited. In the case of the *chargé d'affaires* the letter of credence is signed by the Foreign Minister. In this country the sovereign in making an appointment acts on the advice of his ministers, and only exercises a nominal veto. So lately, however, as 1835, William IV. refused to sanction the nomination of the first Lord Durham as ambassador at St. Petersburg. In the same year, it may be added, a debate in the House of Commons forced Lord Londonderry to resign the same mission, which he had just accepted. The sovereign to whom the ambassador is accredited has also the right to reject any particular individual. So lately as 1833 Nicholas declined to receive the late Lord Stratford de Redcliffe as ambassador to the Court of Russia. The ambassador delivers his credentials in person to the sovereign to whom he is accredited. In this country, however, the sovereign only sees an ambassador in the presence of the foreign

minister. In other countries, the ambassadors have frequent private audiences with the sovereigns at whose courts they reside. The conversations of Sir Hamilton Seymour with the Emperor Nicholas, which preceded the Crimean War, are familiar to most persons; but the conversations of the Duke of Wellington with the same Emperor, more than twenty-five years before, were quite as remarkable, and quite as well worth studying. On the occasion of such interviews as these, in the olden time Latin was the language which was commonly used. In former ages men spoke Latin with ease. De Silva, the Spanish ambassador in London, declared that Elizabeth spoke it "with easy elegance;" and even George I. kept up some sort of conversation with his ministers in Latin. In modern times French has become the ordinary vehicle of conversation. The change from Latin to French took place about the commencement of the eighteenth century. One of the many causes which interrupted the proceedings of the ambassadors at Ryswick was the claim of the representatives of the emperor that the documents should be translated from (to quote Macaulay's phrase) good French into bad Latin.

The right of a personal reception by the sovereign, which every ambassador claims, led, at least on one recent occasion, to a very serious quarrel. In 1841 Louis Philippe sent M. de Salvandy as his ambassador to Madrid. Isabella, Queen of Spain, was at that time a minor, and M. de Salvandy was informed on his arrival that he must present his credentials to Queen Christina, who was the Queen's mother and the Regent, and not to the Queen. M. de Salvandy thought that

the Spanish Government, in conveying to him this decision, acted on the advice of Mr. Aston, the British minister at the Court of Madrid; he imagined that the advice was due to Mr. Aston's desire to maintain British influence supreme. M. de Salvandy, much offended at these orders, wished the French Government to send an army to the Pyrenees, or at any rate to break off all diplomatic intercourse with Spain. The French Government adopted the milder proceeding of simply ordering M. de Salvandy to leave Madrid. The British Foreign Minister, Lord Aberdeen, wrote a firm despatch to Mr. Aston, condemning the conduct of the Spanish Government, which every one attributed to Mr. Aston's influence, and a short time afterwards the French Ministry sent another diplomatist to represent it at the Spanish Court.

It is the duty of an ambassador to keep his employers acquainted with the affairs of the country in which he is stationed; and to sustain the rights of his own nation, and even of private individuals of his own nation who are residing in the country to which he is accredited. In carrying out these duties the ambassador requires to be familiar with the main principles of the Law of Nations, and with the chief treaties by which his own country and other governments are bound. Thrown necessarily into communication with the highest, ablest, and best-informed men of the nation in which he resides, it is essential that he should be a gentleman of ability and knowledge. For the last thirty years British ambassadors have usually held themselves aloof from the politics of the court to which they are accredited; at the more important capitals there is always a considerable

amount of current business; but at the minor courts, except when peace has been either endangered or broken, diplomatists have comparatively little to do. Their leisure, however, ought to be a source of congratulation. If it be true that happy is the nation which has no history, it is much more true that happy is the period when ambassadors have little work.

An ambassador—wrote Mr. Bagehot—is not simply an agent: he is also a spectacle.[1] For many centuries the nations of the world behaved as if they cared more for the spectacle which their agent afforded than for the duty which he discharged. Lodged in regal state, equipped in royal magnificence, the ambassadors aped the manners of kings, and fought with one another for precedence. Till within the last thirty years ambassadors commonly left this country in ships of war. At a former period, they were met on landing by the master of the ceremonies, and conveyed in the king's coaches to the capital. Sometimes, indeed, the journey of an ambassador involved dangers which necessitated exceptional precautions. When the first Lord Heytesbury was accredited to the Court of Russia, the Emperor Nicholas was with his army on the Danube. The ambassador had to penetrate into the seat of war, and he is said by Lord Ellenborough to have carried with him a complete camp equipage. Any one who has had the advantage of access to Lord Heytesbury's MS. Memoirs, will readily endorse Lord Ellenborough's statement. The march of the ambassador was the march of an army, and his adventures as

[1] The English word pomp is derived through the Latin "pompa" from the Greek πέμπω, to send. The original πομπη was generally a religious mission.

perplexing as those of many a belligerent. All ambassadors, however, were not subjected to the embarrassing difficulties which Lord Heytesbury had to encounter on this occasion. In the present day, in the great majority of instances, an ambassador's journey is accomplished with the ease which modern locomotion affords to travellers; and this very fact has tended to reduce the ceremonies which used to be observed. The stage coach in the first instance, and the railway in our own time, have done more to establish equality than all the doctrines of all the encyclopædists; and even kings and their representatives find a convenience in using the conveyances which are at the disposal of the poorest citizens.

Display produces inconvenience, ceremony is attended with delay, and ambassadors perpetually busied with shadows too frequently neglected the substance of their business. The negotiations which ultimately terminated the Thirty Years' War in 1648 were commenced in 1643; the plenipotentiaries who signed the Peace of Nimeguen in February 1679 met in that town in February 1676. If it had not been for William III. the delays which had occurred at Nimeguen and Münster would have been repeated in 1697 at Ryswick. "At the first meeting," wrote Macaulay, "the full powers of the representatives of the belligerent governments were delivered to the mediator. At the second meeting, forty-eight hours later, the mediator performed the ceremony of exchanging these full powers. Then several meetings were spent in settling how many carriages, how many horses, how many lackeys, how many pages, each minister should be entitled to bring to Ryswick; whether the servingmen should carry canes; whether they should wear

swords; whether they should have pistols in their holsters; who should take the upper hand in the public walks, and whose carriage should break the way in the streets. . . . The imperial ambassadors claimed a right to sit at the head of the table. The Spanish ambassador would not admit this pretension, and tried to thrust himself in between two of them. The imperial ambassadors refused to call the ambassadors of electors and commonwealths by the title of Excellency. 'If I am not called Excellency,' said the minister of the Elector of Brandenburg, 'my master will withdraw his troops from Hungary.' The imperial ambassadors insisted on having a room to themselves in the building, and on having a special place assigned to their carriages in the Court. All the other ministers of the Confederacy pronounced the demand altogether inadmissible, and a whole sitting was wasted in this childish dispute. . . . In the middle of April it was known to everybody that Charles the Eleventh, King of Sweden, was dead, and had been succeeded by his son; but it was contrary to etiquette that any of the assembled envoys should appear to be acquainted with this fact till Lilienroth had made a formal announcement; it was not less contrary to etiquette that Lilienroth should make such an announcement till his equipages and his household had been put into mourning; and some weeks elapsed before his coachmakers and tailors had completed their task. At length, on the 12th of June, he came to Ryswick in a carriage lined with black, and attended by servants in black liveries, and there, in full congress, proclaimed that it had pleased God to take to Himself the most puissant King Charles the Eleventh. All the ambassadors then condoled with

their brother on the sad and unexpected news, and went home to put off their embroidery, and to dress themselves in the garb of sorrow. In such solemn trifling week after week passed away. . . It seemed but too probable that the eighteenth century would find great armies still confronting each other on the Meuse and the Rhine, industrious populations still ground down by taxation, fertile provinces still lying waste, the ocean still made impassable by corsairs, and the plenipotentiaries still exchanging notes, drawing up protocols, and quarrelling about the place where this minister should sit, and the title by which that minister should be called."

Fortunately for the cause of humanity, Louis XIV. and William III. both desired peace; and both saw that peace was impracticable if the old machinery were not superseded. A quiet interview was arranged between Boufflers and Portland, and the whole matter was settled in a couple of hours, which the ambassadors alone would not have despatched in as many years. Terms were arranged, and the Peace of Ryswick was signed. This course not only secured peace, but it read a salutary lesson to diplomatists. Leisure was all very well while they were left to themselves. They found it necessary to quicken their paces when monarchs quietly settled their disputes without their assistance.

It would have been happy for diplomacy if a love of display had been the only vice with which diplomatists had been associated. Unfortunately for their repute a much graver charge could be laid against them. In the Middle Ages truth was not expected, falsehood was not condemned, in a minister. In the days of Elizabeth, Sir H. Wotton, himself an envoy, punningly described

an ambassador as an honest man sent to "lie" abroad for the good of his country. Napoleon said of Metternich that "he approaches to being a statesman—he lies very well;" and Sir William Paget, who was one of the ablest of Henry VIII.'s ministers, unblushingly describes his own service at Paris: "I have lied, said truth, spoken fair, roughly, pleasantly, promised gifts, pensions, and done all that may be done or said for the advancement of this matter, and much more than I will abide by, as Will Somers saith, were I asked the question." A sufficient result, adds Mr. Froude, who quotes the statement, would arise in due time from these honest services.[1]

Untruth, therefore, was regarded as an almost indispensable qualification in a diplomatist; and diplomacy became in consequence associated in many people's minds with intrigue and double-dealing.[2] It was probably from this circumstance that it was found necessary to protect the person of an ambassador with special safeguards. A man

[1] A celebrated minister of a foreign country, living about the middle of the last century,—the story was told by Lord Palmerston,—was giving instructions to one of his agents as to the language he should hold in regard to the conduct of another government. The agent ventured to suggest that the language which he was ordered to hold was at variance with fact. What was the minister's answer? Never mind *that!* What in the world does *that* signify? it is a good thing to say, and take care you say it. Mr. Ashley's *Life of Lord Palmerston*, vol. i. p. 428. Custom was on the side of the minister's precepts, not of his agent's scruples.

[2] It is fair to add that many distinguished diplomatists urged the importance of truth. "It is scarcely necessary to say," wrote Lord Malmesbury, "that no occasion, no provocation, . . . can need, much less justify, a falsehood." "The special art required is this," said Lord Clarendon, "to be perfectly honest, truthful, and straightforward."—*Bernard's Four Lectures on Diplomacy*, pp. 127 and 129.

who cannot be trusted is certain to create distrust; and the use of fraud is sure to lead to devices for detecting it. Grave statesmen made it their chief business to intercept despatches, and passed nights and days in endeavouring to decipher them. The ambassadors' couriers were stopped by *soi-disant* brigands or insurgents, who rifled their pockets, and carried their despatches to the minister. Plot was thus met by counterplot; and honourable men resorted to dishonourable expedients in their country's service. Some relic of these old practices survives to our own time. It was stated in the House of Commons in 1845 that letters addressed to foreign ambassadors had so lately as June 1844 been taken to the Foreign Office and there opened; even the British Government maintains a power which, however, is never used except for purposes of police, to open private letters passing through the post; abroad the same expedient is supposed to be more frequently resorted to; and great countries are consequently compelled to maintain a special staff of messengers to carry their despatches.

These proceedings seem the more shameful because in theory the ambassador is surrounded with special privileges and immunities. An ambassador is not subject to the laws of the country in which he resides. His house is supposed to form part of the country which he represents; his family, his servants, and his retinue, enjoy the immunity which attaches to his own person. Specialists refer these privileges to a doctrine which has received the barbarous name of "extra-territoriality" —a word which, of course, signifies that the envoy is not subject to the laws of the country in which he resides. It follows from this doctrine that the ambas-

sador pays no taxes to the foreign power to whom he is accredited, and that neither he nor his suite can be sued in the ordinary courts. By an extension of the same privilege he and his suite are usually exempt from the laws which, in former ages, enforced religious uniformity. By a sort of mutual bargain, concluded between Roman Catholic and Protestant powers, the representatives of both of them were permitted in former ages, when tolerance was not otherwise practised, to worship God in their own manner.

These privileges are secured to the ambassador by the law of nations. It was long, however, before they were admitted by this country. In 1708 an ambassador from Peter the Great was arrested in London for debt. The Czar formally remonstrated, and demanded that the officers who had ventured to make the arrest should be put to death. Queen Anne excused herself by declaring that the law of England gave her no power to punish the officers in fault. The other Foreign Ministers in London, however, took up the quarrel; and "to satisfy" their "clamours, as well as to appease the wrath of Peter, a new statute, viz. 7 Anne, c. 12, was enacted by Parliament, reciting the arrest which had been made 'in contempt of the protection granted by Her Majesty, contrary to the law of nations, and in prejudice of the rights and privileges which ambassadors and other public ministers have at all times been thereby possessed of, and ought to be kept sacred and inviolable.'" Since the date of that Act—which, it will be seen, not merely enacts, but declares the law—the arrest of an ambassador for debt has been illegal in England.

More than sixty years afterwards a much more singu-

lar case occurred. The Venetian resident in London imported, under his privilege as an ambassador, a quantity of goods into England, duty free, for the purposes of trade. London tradesmen naturally resented a privilege which interfered with their own profits, and prayed for redress. The Spanish ambassador in London denounced in strong language the conduct of the Venetian resident; and the Government was emboldened to seize the goods as contraband and carry them to the custom-house. The Venetian resident, when he demanded his goods, was peremptorily told that the King would not suffer him to violate with impunity the laws of Great Britain.

The presence of an ambassador at a foreign court, is, of course, a sign—as it ought to be a guarantee—of peace. The withdrawal of an ambassador is an evidence of discord, and occasionally becomes the precursor of war. When the ambassador withdraws, the business of the legation is usually temporarily entrusted to a *chargé d'affaires*, but in extreme cases all diplomatic intercourse of every kind is suspended. When one country withdraws its ambassador from another, the country from which he is withdrawn may or may not imitate the example. To take a historic instance: the British ambassador at Paris was ordered to leave France after the Revolution of the 10th of August 1792, and the French ambassador continued in London for more than five months afterwards. To take a much more recent example, the Turkish ambassador remained in London after the withdrawal of the British ambassador from Constantinople in the spring of 1877. An ambassador is usually only withdrawn by the orders of his own

employers, but he has occasionally received notice to quit from the power to whom he is accredited. The French ambassador was ordered by the British Government to leave London after the execution of Louis XVI. in January 1793. Sir H. Bulwer was ordered by the Spanish Government to leave Madrid in the spring of 1848.[1] The conduct of the British Government on the former of these occasions made war perhaps inevitable; and France, as a matter of fact, declared war. According to Sir H. Bulwer, Lord Palmerston, in 1848, was similarly in favour of "prompt and decided measures." But the Cabinet would not adopt the Foreign Minister's advice, and declined to pursue the quarrel.

Mr. Pitt, in withdrawing the British ambassador from Paris in August 1792, did so on the ground that the king to whom the ambassador was accredited was a prisoner, and no longer a free agent. As England did not recognise the Republic which had been constituted in France, there was no authority in Paris with whom the ambassador could properly communicate. The British Government, therefore, not merely recalled its agent from Paris, but declined to hold any intercourse with the French ambassador in London. The best commentary on the conduct of Mr. Pitt's Government in 1793 is the course which was subsequently pursued in

[1] Sir H. Bulwer had been instructed by Lord Palmerston in 1848 to recommend the Spanish Government to adopt "a legal and constitutional course of government;" to call to its councils "some of those men who possess the confidence of the Liberal party." Sir H. Bulwer sent a copy of these instructions to General Narvaez, who was at the head of the Spanish Ministry. Narvaez naturally resented them, and returned the copy with an indignant protest, and soon afterwards sent Sir H. Bulwer his passports.

1830, in 1848, in 1852, and in 1870. In 1830 the Duke of Wellington's Government at once recognised the accession of Louis Philippe; in 1848 Lord Normanby, the ambassador at Paris, was ordered to remain at his post, and "to hold such unofficial communications" with the Provisional "Government as may be necessary for the public service;" in 1852 Lord Derby's Government at once recognised the accession of the third Napoleon; in 1870 Mr. Gladstone's Government at once recognised his fall. These and the other numerous changes which have occurred in the supreme power in France have not suspended diplomatic intercourse for a day; and modern statesmen are thus agreed in concluding that the king *de facto*—whether he be styled king, emperor, or president—is the only king *de jure* with whom diplomacy has to deal.

If modern diplomacy, however, deals with facts only, doubt occasionally occurs on the facts themselves. A diplomatic representative is only sent to an independent power; and, in the case of insurgent nationalities acquiring their independence, the exact moment at which independence is won is necessarily a question of fact. In some cases, indeed, the fact is so plain that it does not admit of dispute. The independence of Greece was secured by treaty; the consolidation of Italy and Germany was also effected by treaties; and statesmen in these cases had only to recognise facts which were apparent to all the world. But questions of much greater difficulty have occasionally occurred. At what precise period did the Spanish colonies of America acquire their independence? At what precise period did Belgium cease to be a part of Holland? At what precise point,

in short, is insurrection justified by success? The eloquent passage, in which Mr. Canning boasted that he had called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old, has probably induced many people to imagine that the action of the British minister secured the independence of the Spanish colonies. But any one who will carefully read the correspondence on this subject will see that Mr. Canning abstained from interference till the power of Spain was virtually destroyed throughout the whole of South and Central America. The facts of the case fully justified his action, though his steps were probably quickened by the knowledge of the influence which France was acquiring in Spain. Much less difficulty arose in 1830 concerning the independence of Belgium. The Dutch themselves were virtually prepared to recognise it as an independent kingdom; and the preliminary step taken in 1830 to secure its independence was accordingly taken in concert with the rest of Europe.

The terrible struggle which took place twenty years ago in the United States raised indirectly the same issue. Some persons in this country, sympathising with the gallant efforts of the Southern States, desired that Britain should recognise the independence of the Confederate Government. Neither the precedent which Mr. Canning had established in 1824, nor the principle on which Lord Palmerston had acted in 1830, would have justified such recognition. The Northern States had not, like Spain, virtually abandoned the struggle; they were not, like Holland, assenting parties to the independence of the insurgents. The British ministry consequently declined to recognise the Confederate

States. But, though the ministry refused to recognise their independence, it recognised them as belligerents. Any other course would, indeed, have been impracticable. If the Confederates had not been recognised as belligerents, every cruiser which the Confederate Government succeeded in equipping must have been regarded as a pirate. The public opinion both of Europe and America would have equally condemned such a conclusion. If the Confederates, moreover, had not been regarded as belligerents, neutral powers could not have admitted the validity of the blockade of the Southern ports which the Federal fleet succeeded in establishing; for a country may not blockade its own coasts; it can only blockade the coasts of an enemy. It follows from this example that, in the case of civil war, a State may recognise the belligerent rights of both combatants; but that it must be guided by the facts in each case in determining the precise moment when one party has maintained the superiority; or when insurrection becomes justified by success, and treason, prospering, "is no longer treason."

This chapter has hitherto been concerned with the duties which an ambassador has ordinarily to discharge, and with the privileges which he enjoys. It must be recollected, however, that, in addition to these ordinary duties, the ambassador has occasionally to perform much more important functions. Questions of international importance arise for settlement; and the discussions upon them are usually conducted through the embassies resident in the countries concerned. These questions may have every kind of importance. They may refer only to the extradition of a criminal or the details

of a tariff, or they may deal with the boundaries of States and the aspirations of nationalities. On occasions of great importance, however, in which many States have an interest, it is customary to take the matter out of the hands of the ordinary ambassador, and to collect the representatives of the Great Powers together in Congresses and Conferences. A Congress is usually a meeting either of Sovereigns or of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the various countries represented. A Conference is a meeting of Ambassadors or Special Envoys. Thus, from a diplomatic point of view, the Congress is a more imposing expedient than the Conference.

The first Congress in European history was that at Münster and Oldenburg, which brought the Thirty Years' War to a tardy close. The first Congress in which England took part was that at Nimeguen, when Charles II. was forced to abandon the French alliance, and to adopt Sir William Temple's policy. The most important Congresses of the present century were those of Vienna, in 1814-15; of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1818; of Troppau, in 1820, adjourned to Laybach in 1821; of Vienna, adjourned to Verona, in 1822; of Paris, in 1856; and of Berlin, in 1878. The most important Conferences were those which met in London in 1830, and secured the independence of Belgium, and in 1871 for modifying the treaty of 1856; at Vienna, in 1853, before the Crimean War; and in 1855, during its continuance; and at Constantinople, in 1877. On minor occasions, when two or three States desire to confer on some question of less general interest, they meet in what is known as a Convention.

At the Congress, at the Conference, and at the Con-

vention, the same procedure is adopted. The deliberations of the envoys are embodied in written instruments known as protocols. The word is of Greek origin, and signifies literally the first limb, or, in plainer English, the first rough draft of the proceedings. It is the business of diplomacy to embody the conclusions of the draft in a formal treaty, which, however, is not binding on the nations represented at the Congress until it is formally ratified by each of them.

A treaty, like the meeting at which it is framed, may deal with any subject. The treaty, or treaties, of Vienna rearranged the whole map of Europe, and settled—for the time, at any rate—the position of every State on the Continent. But the treaties of Vienna must be placed in a category by themselves; and ordinary treaties cover less ground. Those which are of exceptional interest to nations may perhaps be divided into three categories—1st, treaties intended to prevent war; 2d, treaties made in anticipation of war; and 3d, treaties consequent on war. Treaties intended to prevent war may either contain a surrender by one party of the issue in dispute—as, for instance, the Treaty of Ackermann did in 1827—or they may refer the matter in dispute to some peaceful arbitrator, as the Treaty of Washington did in 1871. Treaties made in anticipation of war may pledge one country to aid another which is attacked by external force, or—like the Triple Alliance of Sir William Temple and the Grand Alliance of William III.—may combine two or more countries in a league against a possible enemy. Treaties consequent on war usually involve a transfer of territory. The treaties which closed the Crimean War set back the boundaries

of Russia to the Pruth; the Treaty of Berlin restored the frontier line to the Danube.

Occasionally, when international arrangements of this character are made, the contracting parties endeavour to enforce their observance either by placing a weak State under the protection of a strong one, or by either collectively or individually guaranteeing the independence or the neutrality of a particular people or territory. Such guarantees used to be a common expedient among diplomatists; and this country in particular has frequently incurred obligations of this character. Of late years, however, there has been a growing tendency among statesmen to abstain from pledging the country to a prospective policy; and this tendency has been strengthened by two considerations—1st, the growing belief that England should abstain from intervening in the internal affairs of other countries; and 2d, a prevalent suspicion that the guarantee—like all prospective arrangements—is little more than an empty form. So long ago as 1831, a high authority—Sir James Mackintosh—placed this matter very clearly. He denied that the mere fact of an offensive and defensive alliance with Portugal forced England in every event to help her ally. "Could any man suppose that we were bound to support Portugal through any unjust war in which she might engage? No; on the contrary, the concurrent testimony of all jurists established the principle that faith and justice were bound indissolubly together. Were it otherwise, it would be a league between robbers, and not a defensive treaty between nations." And, in our own time, the present Lord Derby, speaking of a guarantee which he had himself signed in concert with the great

European Powers, used these words—"The guarantee now given is collective only. . . . It means this, that in the event of a violation of neutrality all the powers who have signed the treaty may be called upon for their collective action. No one of those powers is liable to be called upon to act singly or separately. It is a case, so to speak, of limited liability. We are bound in honour—you cannot place a legal construction upon it—to see, in concert with others, that these arrangements are maintained. But if the other powers join with us it is certain that there will be no violation of neutrality. If they, situated exactly as we are, decline to join, it is certain that we are not bound to make up the deficiencies of the rest. Such a guarantee has obviously rather the character of a moral sanction to the arrangements which it defends than that of a contingent liability to make war. It would no doubt give a right to make war, but it would not necessarily impose the obligation. . . . Take an instance from what we have done already. We have guaranteed Switzerland; but if all Europe combined against Switzerland, although we might regret it, we should hardly feel bound to go to war with all the world for the protection of Switzerland. We were parties to the arrangements which were made about Poland; they were broken, and we did not go to war. I only name those cases as showing that it does not necessarily and inevitably follow that you are bound to maintain the guarantee under all circumstances by force of arms."

These two opinions—one of them that of a profound jurist, the other that of a cautious and well-informed statesman—make it tolerably plain that the guarantee is little more than a promise to consider the expediency of

support when the occasion for it arises. Any other construction would in fact be impossible. A generation, like an individual, might possibly undertake to support in any contingency a particular arrangement. But, as no individual could make such a promise for his successors, so no generation could inflict such a burden on posterity.

If this be true of all guarantees, it is of course much more true of guarantees which are conditional on the good behaviour of the State whose territories are the subject of it. A guarantee, which promises the independence of a territory on condition that certain political reforms are introduced into the government, imposes upon posterity the task of ascertaining whether these reforms are undertaken or not. But it does not remove the concurrent obligation of examining the justice of the quarrel in which the State which demands the fulfilment of the guarantee is engaged. It makes the assistance doubly conditional. It indicates that the aid, which would not in any case be granted unless the quarrel in which it was demanded was just, will in no case be conceded unless some reforms which probably had nothing to do with the quarrel have been executed.

It is the business of diplomacy to secure peace; but its labours are occasionally unable to prevent war. In the old republics of Greece and Italy the right of declaring war rested with the people themselves; in the feudal monarchies of modern Europe the power of declaring war was usually assumed by the king; and in this country the Crown, it has been already stated, possesses the sole right of declaring war. In the old world a declaration of war was sent by a herald, and war was considered unjust and impious which was not so declared and pro-

claimed; in mediæval periods the same chivalrous rule was followed, and heralds were sent from nation to nation with formal declarations of war. Since the seventeenth century the old usage has fallen into disuse, and the declaration by the herald has been superseded by the publication of a manifesto or proclamation by the belligerent. But war has been occasionally commenced without any such preliminary. No declaration or proclamation of war preceded the sailing of the Spanish Armada; the battle of Dettingen was actually fought, and the English army was commanded by George II. in person, while France and England were nominally at peace; and other instances of the same kind could also be given. The highest authorities on International Law have, however, either recommended or insisted on the issue of a manifesto or declaration before the war; and in recent times such a manifesto has been usually issued by the government which appealed to arms.

War itself has been occasionally avoided by a recourse to either mediation or arbitration. It was the distinction of the Treaty of Paris—which terminated the Crimean War—that it formally prescribed mediation as the remedy for any future differences on Eastern affairs. In this, however, as in other instances, the remedy proved impracticable. It is difficult, indeed, to see how either mediation or arbitration in such cases can be uniformly successful. The disputants will occasionally disagree on the selection of an arbitrator, and they may possibly refuse to accept an unfavourable award. A court whose jurisdiction may be rejected by either or both of the parties before it, and which has no power to enforce its decisions, is not likely to prove a very efficient tribunal.

If, however, the recommendation of the Treaty of Paris—that war should be superseded by mediation—has proved abortive, the treaty deserves to be recollected from the effort which was made by its negotiators to limit the range of naval warfare. In the ancient world the "property of the vanquished," to quote Mr. Wheaton's language, "passed to the conqueror." But in modern Europe the victor by land has abstained from using or abusing the rights of conquest, and from confiscating the property of private persons. The conquest of England by William I. furnishes the last instance of a victory followed by a "general or partial transmutation of landed property;" and in recent times, except in the case of reprisals or of towns captured by assault, even the personal property of private individuals has been usually respected by the belligerents. In maritime warfare, however, a somewhat different rule has been always followed; and the private property of an enemy has been, and still is, liable to capture and confiscation. Till a comparatively recent period this rule was pushed to an extreme which may excite surprise. The private property of an enemy was not merely liable to capture, but it was even liable to capture when it was carried on a neutral vessel. In the reign of Louis XIV. the French carried this principle still further, and declared the neutral vessel, with an enemy's goods on board, a lawful prize.

If an enemy's goods on board a neutral vessel were liable to capture, it would apparently follow that the goods of a neutral on board an enemy's vessel should be surrendered by the captor. International law, however, was usually settled in the interest of belligerents; and the neutral goods on the enemy's vessel shared the fate

of the enemy's goods on the neutral vessel. Even, however, before the eighteenth century, some attempt was made to introduce a milder practice; and several treaties were framed on the principle that the character of the ship should determine the character of the cargo. In other words, the neutral or free ship was to make free goods; the hostile or enemy ship was to make enemy goods. The several treaties framed with this object by different nations are detailed by Mr. Wheaton, from whose work on International Law this short account is taken. At last, in 1780, Catherine II. of Russia framed the famous declaration "that free ships make free goods, without the previously associated maxim that enemy ships should make enemy goods." All the Great Powers, except England, accepted the rule; and a new advance was thus made towards the present practice. The Napoleonic wars, indeed, temporarily checked the tide of progress, but the long period of peace which succeeded Waterloo gave new importance to the trade of neutrals. At last, in 1856, the parties to the Treaty of Paris agreed on four new rules, by which the countries whom they represented have since been bound, and to which most other nations have since assented. The first of these is, that privateering is and remains abolished; the second, that the neutral flag covers the cargo of an enemy, except when it is contraband of war; the third, that neutral goods, not contraband of war, are not seizable under an enemy's flag; the fourth, that blockades, to be obligatory, must be effective.

These rules rob maritime warfare of some of its worst features; but they have not been accepted by the great republic of the United States. The Americans declined

to be a party to the abolition of privateering, unless private property at sea were made free from capture. This proposal produced a long negotiation, which proved ultimately abortive; and technically, therefore, the United States are still free from the engagement, under which most other powers lie, to submit to the four new rules.

It has been the object of this chapter to trace the gradual improvement of the machinery which diplomacy employs for regulating the affairs of a world. It would be folly to deny that it has proved in many instances slow, inefficient, and heartless; it would be equal folly to deny that, notwithstanding its many shortcomings, it has on the whole discharged useful service. When men's passions are excited, it is no slight service to humanity to devise any machinery which may cause the angry man either to hesitate or to think. Even delay may itself be serviceable if it afford an opportunity for animosity to cool. But diplomacy has performed a higher service than this. It has educated the public to believe that war is not the first resource to which a nation may appeal; and the most unscrupulous sovereign, in consequence, hesitates to draw the sword till he has exhausted the expedients of diplomatic intercourse. Diplomacy has made many blunders; it is responsible for many crimes; but it has at least effected one great service: it has made war a little more difficult.

CHAPTER V.

CONSULS.

MR. COBDEN complained, in his earliest political pamphlet, that the warriors and statesmen who represented us at Vienna forgot to utter one word about our merchants. "It was unbecoming the dignity of our gallant and noble plenipotentiaries to stipulate for the welfare of the artisans and manufacturers of Great Britain." This complaint came perhaps naturally from a politician who was a warm admirer of the commercial policy of the younger Pitt, "before he was drawn into the vortex of war by a selfish aristocracy;" and who concluded his great career by negotiating the most important commercial treaty to which this country has ever been a party. But it may be doubted whether Lord Castlereagh's conduct was not at least as wise as Mr. Cobden's criticism. "I trust,"—so spoke one of the greatest financiers who ever governed this country,—"that the Government will not resume the policy which they and we have felt most inconvenient—namely, the haggling with foreign countries about reciprocal concessions instead of taking that independent course which we believe to be conducive to our own interests."

Commercial treaties, when they were originally introduced, had a very different object from that with which

they are now associated. They were intended to obtain security for the merchant rather than extension for his trade. In the Middle Ages, the inhabitant of one nation, settled for industrial purposes in another, was under legal and social disadvantages of a vexatious character. These it was the object of the earliest commercial treaties to remove. But, in the course of the seventeenth century, this object was, almost naturally, neglected for another. Trade was everywhere acquiring fresh importance; the traders of the world were penetrating into unknown seas, and venturing to settle on remote continents for the sake of securing for themselves or their partners exclusive privileges; and statesmen and governments were encouraging trade by the grant of monopolies to individuals. In an age of exclusion, diplomacy naturally endeavoured to obtain exclusive rights in foreign countries, and nations consequently concluded treaties for the advantage of their merchants. This policy has survived the downfall of the political doctrine on which it was originally founded; the growth of commercial intercourse has suggested the multiplication of treaties; and, at the present time, this country has concluded commercial treaties of more or less importance with most foreign nations.

The first important step in this direction was the treaty which Mr. Methuen concluded with Portugal in 1703. At that time England was, of course, contending with the combined forces of Spain and France. Portugal and England drew together; and the interest, which bound their fortunes by a common knot, suggested the conclusion of a commercial treaty. Briefly stated, England engaged to admit Portuguese wines for ever at one-

third less duty than she admitted French wines; while Portugal, in return, undertook to admit English cloth free of duty. There can be no doubt as to one of the effects of this treaty. It turned the country, for 150 years, from a claret-drinking into a port-drinking people. There is, perhaps, more doubt as to its commercial consequences. It "was almost universally regarded, for a very long period," wrote the late Mr. M'Culloch, "as admirably calculated to promote the interests of this country; but it is now generally admitted by every one who has reflected upon such subjects that few transactions have taken place by which these interests have been more deeply injured. . . . It is owing more to the stipulations in the Methuen Treaty than to anything else that the trade between France and England — a trade that would naturally be of vast extent and importance—has so long been confined within comparatively narrow limits."

Ten years after the Methuen Treaty was signed, Bolingbroke endeavoured to introduce a new policy. He negotiated a commercial treaty with France, which, to all intents and purposes, terminated the Methuen Treaty. The Methuen Treaty had stipulated that the wine of Portugal should be admitted at a duty one-third less than that charged on French wine; and Bolingbroke's Treaty contemplated the admission of all French goods on the same terms as those on which the goods of the most favoured nation were admitted. Unfortunately for England, her people were hardly ripe for the change of policy which Bolingbroke thus suggested. Political writers undertook to show that trade with France was injurious and that trade with Portugal was beneficial; Parliament failed to detect the fallacy of these argu-

ments; the House of Commons rejected the treaty by a narrow majority; and for more than seventy years nothing was heard of a commercial treaty with France. In 1787 Mr. Pitt resumed the policy which Bolingbroke had proposed, and concluded the great treaty with France, which is the most interesting feature of the first years of his administration. But this treaty was only destined to endure for a short period. It was interrupted by war; and no other similar arrangement was concluded between the two nations till Mr. Cobden persuaded the third Napoleon to approve the treaty of 1859. Mr. Cobden, on concluding the treaty, perhaps naturally thought that Lord Castlereagh might have anticipated his labours forty years before. But Mr. Cobden's opinion was not universally adopted. Many statesmen, in fact, were beginning to doubt whether treaties made for the express purpose of promoting trade were in the long run advantageous to the nations who were parties to them. Free traders were beginning to discover that a commercial treaty is an expedient for reciprocity; that reciprocity is another name for protection; and, therefore, that if free trade be a wise policy, commercial treaties must be unwise.

Whether, however, commercial treaties made for the purpose of affording express advantages to the traders of other nations be expedient or not, every civilised State finds it necessary to make other arrangements for the protection of its traders. It appoints consuls at the various centres of trade abroad, and charges them with the especial duty of maintaining the interests of its merchants or of its citizens in foreign parts.

It is not easy to give an accurate account of the origin

of consuls. In mediæval times, however, persons settled for commercial purposes in foreign nations naturally tended, either for purposes of mutual protection or society, to live close together. Just as in the present time the Jews in Rome still live in the Ghetto, or in London in Whitechapel, so, in the old time, most great commercial cities had a Lombard Street or Lombard quarter, in which the merchants of Italy resided; while to the traders of other nations in Italy and elsewhere separate quarters were usually assigned. It was natural that the citizens of one country, congregated in another, should pay some respect to the most influential of their number. Authority was gradually conceded to one or two members of these isolated communities, who, as aldermen in the Hanse towns, judge-conservators in Portugal, syndics, jurats, governors, etc., elsewhere, exercised some sort of judicial powers among their fellow-citizens. Italy was the great centre of trade—the pier or landing-stage which Nature had projected into the Mediterranean towards the East—and in Italy every civil functionary in every petty city adopted the name of consul, once the proudest title ever conferred by man on his fellow-men;[1] and the leading merchants settled in the cities of Italy enjoyed authority as consuls. The supremacy of Italian commerce gradually led to the universal use of the term employed in Italy, and com-

[1] Gibbon says of the reforms which were introduced under the influence of Arnold of Brescia into the government of Rome in the twelfth century: "With their liberty the Romans might doubtless have restored the appellation and office of consuls, had they not disdained a title so promiscuously adopted in the Italian cities that it has finally settled on the humble station of the agents of commerce in foreign lands."—*Decline and Fall*, vol. xii. p. 279.

mercial agents in every part of the world became spoken of as consuls.

Some little time elapsed before the persons who were thus placed in office received any commission from the government to which the citizens who gave them their power owed allegiance. But in due course a custom which had originated in convenience was recognised by authority; and the various governments themselves appointed persons in foreign cities to superintend the interests of their subjects resident in those places. These persons or consuls were usually large traders, but they do not seem necessarily to have belonged to the nation appointing them. The first consul ever appointed by a King of England appears to have been an Italian, or rather Tuscan, Lorenzo Strozzi, who was made consul at Pisa in 1485. It may be a surprise to some persons to discover that a great commercial reform of this character was instituted in the reign of the monarch whom Shakespeare has made Englishmen regard as the most execrable of his race. To Strozzi's appointment Richard III. was moved by observing from the practice of other nations the advantage of having a magistrate appointed for the purpose of settling disputes among Englishmen abroad.

The example which was thus set was slowly imitated. Consuls were gradually appointed at other foreign cities in Italy and elsewhere; and in 1640 a further step was taken by the appointment of a consul-general at Alicante. It was the "principal duty of these officers to protect and promote the lawful trade and trading interests of Great Britain by every fair and proper means, taking care to conform to the laws and regulations" of the country in which they resided; they were also enjoined to caution

British subjects against carrying on an illicit commerce. These duties in course of time have undergone a natural process of enlargement. In addition to them, consuls are now required to assist British subjects tried for offences in the local courts; to ascertain the humanity of their treatment after sentence; to send in reports on the export and import trade of the district in which they reside; to furnish the Board of Trade with reports and returns on matters relating to British shipping; to make inquiry on oath respecting offences committed by British seamen on the high seas; to detain foreign vessels which have caused injury to British shipping; and to discharge many other duties.[1] In fact, it is the duty and privilege of the British consul abroad to aid and advise any British subject who requires his counsel or assistance.

The consuls who are thus employed act under a commission from the government to which they owe their appointment; they receive an *exœquatur* or license to act from the government in whose territory they discharge their functions.[2] But they do not everywhere possess the same powers or enjoy the same status. In

[1] There is an excellent summary of these duties in the ninth edition of *Encyclopœdia Britannica, sub verb.* "Consul," by Mr. W. C. Smith.

[2] Lord Palmerston said, in 1846: "A consul cannot act without an *exœquatur* from the government of the country in which he is to be placed; and it is acknowledged to be the perfect right of every government to accept or refuse the placing of consular agents in any part of its territory." Lord Beaconsfield, on the contrary, declared in 1864, that "Her Majesty has the right to send a consular agent to any place she thinks fit."—(*Collected Speeches*, ii. 157.) But this statement must apparently be accepted with the qualification that the agent could not act without the leave of the power in whose territory he resided. It ought, perhaps, to be added, that in Turkey the *exœquatur* is called a "*berat.*"

some countries their presence is allowed by express stipulations; in others it is merely tacitly recognised by the authorities. Under these circumstances they do not enjoy the various immunities which are secured to diplomatists. They are liable to arrest; and unless treaties have specially protected them, they contribute to the taxation of the State in which they reside. These conditions are almost inseparable from the circumstances under which many of them are still appointed. Originally the leading merchants of the place in which they discharged their functions, they are still frequently selected from persons engaged in trade in the locality. In many towns, indeed, where the consular work is slight, it would be a needless expense to appoint an officer to do nothing but perform these trivial duties; but of late years there has been a growing tendency to discourage the employment of traders as consuls,[1] and an increasing disposition to make the consular service an independent profession.

The remarks which have hitherto been made are applicable to consuls in most of the principal countries of the world. They do not apply without qualification to consuls either in the Levant or in the East. Most European nations found it necessary, on establishing a trade with the East, to make special arrangements for the protection of their merchants. In this country, from the days of James I. to the days of George IV., the

[1] A House of Commons Committee, appointed in 1858, recommended, *inter alia*, that consuls should be prohibited from trading; and that the number of vice-consuls in Europe should be diminished; and that the licenses to trade should be gradually abolished. The Committee on Diplomatic and Consular Services, which reported in 1872, stated that prohibition to trade has become the general rule of the service.

trade of the Levant was conducted by a Company known as the Levant Company. The Company was empowered by its charter to appoint consuls to places within the dominions of the Grand Seigneur, with power to govern, to do justice to, and, if necessary, even to imprison, British merchants. The Turk, on his part, agreed not to meddle in the differences between the English settled in his territory, but leave them to be settled by their own ambassador or consuls. These powers were for 150 years exercised by the agents of the Company. They were transferred in 1826, on the abolition of the Company's privileges, to the consuls appointed by the Crown. Consuls in the Levant, there fore, instead of merely exercising executive functions, are charged with judicial duties of importance; and the same principle has been extended of late years to the consuls appointed to various ports in China and Japan. Like their co-officials in the Levant, these functionaries are authorised to act as judicial as well as executive officers; power to do so being secured to them by express stipulations in treaties with these countries.

This short account of the duties of a consul will perhaps sufficiently indicate the difference between such an officer and an ambassador. It is the primary duty of the consul to promote trade; it is the chief function of the ambassador to attend to affairs.

In former ages both ambassadors and consuls were selected from the friends of the minister or from the supporters of the government; the minor posts connected with each embassy were similarly bestowed on men who had no previous training for them. Literary men of promise, of whom Locke, Prior, and Hume are

well-known instances, became secretaries to legations; and young men, intended ultimately for promotion to high situations in the service, also served a short apprenticeship in the same posts. Ambassadors are still occasionally selected from the general public; no previous training is usually required for a consulship; but, with these exceptions, the inferior posts in the diplomatic service are almost uniformly reserved for those who have made diplomacy a profession. On one recent occasion, indeed, a minister who delighted in departing from tradition selected a gentleman not trained in the diplomatic service for the secretaryship of an important embassy. But the remonstrance which the appointment excited afforded a clear proof that the proceeding was unusual, and gave, perhaps, a sufficient guarantee that the repetition of it is improbable.

The entrance into the diplomatic service is now the prize of successful competition among a limited number of candidates nominated for the purpose;[1] and, in consequence, the competitor who has outstripped his rivals in the day of trial naturally assumes that he has a right to ascend to the highest rounds of the ladder on the lower steps of which his own abilities have placed him. And the same tendency has been promoted by the greater control which, during the last fifty years, the House of Commons has succeeded in obtaining over the diplomatic and consular services. Up to the accession of William IV. the salaries of the diplomatic service were charged on the Civil List; they did not, therefore, come directly before Parliament

[1] A test examination by the Civil Service Commissioners was introduced in 1856 by the late Lord Clarendon.

at all; and the House of Commons had not the opportunity, even if an unreformed House of Commons had had the desire, to consider their propriety. Since 1830, however, these charges have been taken out of the Civil List, and placed under the control of Parliament.

How important this control is may be inferred from any analysis of the diplomatic and consular services. Diplomacy furnishes active employment to one hundred and nineteen individuals; and these gentlemen receive among them more than £200,000 a year. The ambassadors at Paris and Constantinople each receive £10,000 a year; the ambassador at Vienna, £8000; the ambassador at St. Petersburg, £7800; the ambassadors at Berlin and Rome, £7000 each. But these salaries, large as they are, do not represent the whole emoluments of these posts. Each embassy is provided at the public cost with a mansion in which the ambassador resides. In some cases, these residences have been built or purchased by the country; and their cost has disappeared out of the annual estimates; but in many places they are hired for the purpose, and the rent which is paid for them becomes an annual charge on the Estimates. The rent of the embassy at Berlin is £3000 a year, and the emoluments of the post are virtually £10,000 and not £7000 a year. In addition to these six posts,—the great prizes of the diplomatic service,—there are fourteen envoys-extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary, three ministers plenipotentiary, ten ministers resident, and four *chargés d'affaires*, as well as eighty-two other individuals in subordinate positions. The salaries of these one hundred and nineteen individuals are placed in the estimates of 1881-2 at rather more than £203,000 a year.

The consular service affords employment to a much larger staff of persons. According to the Foreign Office list, there are no less than 37 consuls-general,[1] 136 consuls, and 439 vice-consuls. These 612 officers, however, only receive in the aggregate £252,000 a year. The salaries of these officers, however, do not represent their whole cost. The superannuation allowances of retired consuls and diplomatists exceed £60,000 a year. The rent and repairs of buildings abroad cost more than £20,000 annually, and the total cost of the diplomatic and consular services amounts to about £540,000 a year.

This large sum, which exceeds the whole revenue of England in the days of Elizabeth, is one of the pledges which this country pays for the sake of preserving peaceful relations with other nations, and of obtaining some protection for its trade. Large as the sum is, it is willingly paid by a people who have learned that their first interest is peace; and that, while trade secures peace, peace promotes trade. Writers, consequently, who—like the present Governor of Madras—have made foreign policy their study, point to the future extension of diplomacy; and regard the labours of diplomatists as expedients for promoting peace and brotherhood, and for effecting progress and reform.

It is not likely, therefore, that future generations will see any diminution in the number of the agents whom this country finds it necessary to maintain abroad; and the gradual progress of ideas, though it is introducing constant changes into foreign policy, will not diminish the necessity of maintaining officials of high

[1] 10 of these are included in the list of ministers *chargés d'affaires*, and so are counted twice over.

rank in other countries. But diplomacy is already being subjected to changes as vast as those which have already revolutionised the foreign policy of this country. The old perils which for centuries disturbed our ancestors are obviously removed. Scotland is an integral part of the United Kingdom; Spain, bereft of her American possessions, is impotent for offence; France, our ancient rival, is our nearest neighbour and our chief ally. The old doctrine of the Balance of Power, which prompted war in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, has lost its significance in Western Europe; and the claims which nationalities possess have superseded the old theories of balanced dynasties. The doctrine, however, which has retired from the Scheldt and the Tagus, has appeared again on the Bosphorus and on the Danube; and statesmen are still considering how they may maintain in the East, the balance which they have ceased even to desire in the West, of Europe.

Possibly if subject nationalities in Eastern Europe ultimately succeed in asserting their superiority, British statesmen may consider the doctrine of non-intervention which is almost universally applied in the West, applicable also to the East; and diplomacy, instead of extending its active support to tottering dynasties, may occupy itself with exerting its moral influence in the cause of progress.

Whatever value these conjectures may have, one thing is at least certain. There is a growing tendency in the people of this country to assert its control over the foreign policy of the State. It is still content to leave in the hands of the Crown and its advisers the nominal right of declaring war or concluding treaties. But it surrounds

the prerogative with safeguards which make its independent exercise constantly more difficult. The days have long gone by when a king, like William III., could be his own foreign minister. Fifty years have passed since the pay of the diplomatic service was placed under the direct control of Parliament; and recent events, which are still in progress, have shown that foreign policy, once the occupation of kings and statesmen, is at last absorbing the attention of the people, and producing the rise and fall of ministries.

It is the natural consequence of those events that diplomacy, once a close profession, accessible only to the great, is being gradually opened to the people at large. The prizes of the service, which used to be reserved for peers, or persons designed for peerages, may now be won by any Englishman who chooses to enter the diplomatic service. The full results of this change are not yet perhaps visible. It would be improper to discuss them in these pages. Here it has only been possible to draw a bare outline of the great changes which have occurred in British foreign policy both in the days of old as well as in our own time. The object of this little book will be secured if it induces the English citizen to reflect on the momentous issues which are involved in the proper conduct of the foreign policy of the British Empire.

THE END.

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